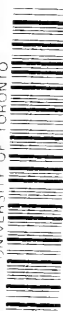
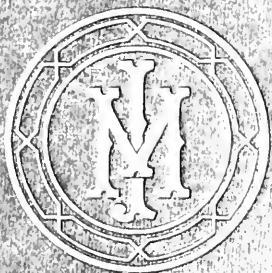


A PUBLISHER  
AND HIS FRIENDS

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

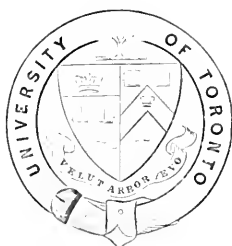


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*Affectly yrs  
J. Murray*

BORN 1745. — DIED 1793.

*A PUBLISHER AND HIS FRIENDS*

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MEMOIR AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF THE LATE

JOHN MURRAY,

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF  
THE HOUSE, 1768-1843

SAMUEL SMILES, LL.D.

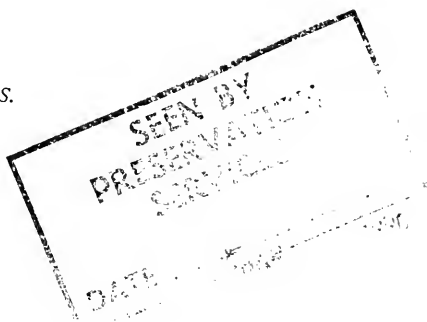
AUTHOR OF 'LIVES OF THE ENGINEERS,' 'SELF-HELP,' ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

*WITH PORTRAITS.*

LONDON :  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1891.



LONDON:  
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,  
STAMFORD STREET AND CHARING CROSS.

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## P R E F A C E.

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IT is not necessary to give in any detail an introduction to the Memoir and Correspondence of the late John Murray. The Memoir, and especially the Correspondence of the Publisher and his friends, will speak for themselves. They are of value as giving a full picture of the literature and principal men of letters of the first half of the present century. Indeed, going still farther back—to the life and correspondence of the late Mr. Murray's father—they include, to a certain extent, the literature of the times of Dr. Johnson, Dr. Langhorne, Dr. Cartwright, and others.

The late Mr. Murray was the intimate friend and correspondent of Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Canning, Southey, the Disraelis, Campbell, Crabbe, Hallam, Croker, Milman, Washington Irving, Madame de Staël; as well as of the early editors of the *Quarterly*, Gifford, Coleridge, and Lockhart; and many original letters from these authors are given in the following pages.

It was observed by Southey that a man's character may be judged of even more surely by the letters which his friends addressed to him, than by those which he himself penned. The same observation was made by Sir Henry Taylor; and, guided by this standard, the readers

of these volumes will have little difficulty in forming an opinion as to the estimation in which Mr. Murray was held by his friends and contemporaries.

Lord Byron's letters to Mr. Murray, published in Moore's *Life*, have long been regarded not only as the best letters the poet ever wrote, but as masterpieces of English prose ; but hitherto Mr. Murray's letters, which called them forth, and form the complement of the correspondence, have never been made public. These, having been preserved by Lord Byron, and found amongst his papers, were bequeathed to Lord Broughton, and have been presented by his daughter, Lady Dorchester, to the present Mr. Murray. Many of these are incorporated in the following pages.

No attempt has been made, nor would it have been possible within the reasonable limits of such a work as this, to give a detailed account of the men and women whose names appear in its pages, and, for the most part, those names are already familiar to every student of literature.

The correspondence, which it is believed will, as a whole, cast fresh light on many an obscure spot in the history of modern English literature, is left, as far as possible, to tell its own tale, aided only by such elucidations and notes as seemed necessary for the use of the general reader. In carrying out this intention, it has occasionally been found necessary to print the whole or a portion of letters which have already appeared elsewhere, but for the most part, the materials included in these volumes are now published for the first time.

The letters which passed between the Publisher and his friends, extending over more than fifty years, were of course exceedingly numerous, and the necessary labour of

searching, sifting, and collating, has been very great ; but only the most important correspondence has been introduced in the Memoir.

I cannot conclude this brief Preface without acknowledging the great assistance I have received from Mr. John Murray, jun., who has with great assiduity and skill collected and annotated the correspondence which forms the principal portion of these volumes ; and I also beg to offer my thanks to Mr. W. J. Courthope, who has read the proofs as the work was passing through the press, and in the concluding chapter has so ably summarized the characteristic traits of the late Mr. Murray as a Publisher.

S. S.

LONDON, *February* 1891.





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 LORD AND LADY BYRON. *From an original sketch*  
*by Lady Caroline Lamb* . . . . . *To face page* 350



# MEMOIRS OF JOHN MURRAY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### JOHN MACMURRAY OR MURRAY.

THE publishing house of Murray dates from the year 1768, in which year John MacMurray, a lieutenant of Marines, having retired from the service on half-pay, purchased the bookselling business of William Sandby, at the sign of the 'Ship,' No. 32, Fleet Street, opposite St. Dunstan's Church. Mr. Sandby afterwards became a banker in the old established firm of Snow and Co., in the Strand.

John MacMurray was descended from the Murrays of Athol. His uncle, Colonel Murray, was "out" in the rising of 1715, under the Earl of Mar; served under the Marquis of Tullibardine, the son of his chief, the Duke of Athol, and led a regiment in the abortive fight of Sheriffmuir. After the rebellion against the Hanoverian dynasty had been suppressed, Colonel Murray retired to France, where he served under the exiled Duke of Ormonde, who had attached himself to the Stuart Court.

The Colonel's brother Robert followed a safer course. He prefixed the "Mac" to his name; settled in Edinburgh; adopted the law as a profession, and became a writer to the Signet. He had a family of three daughters,

Catherine, Robina, and Mary Anne ; and two sons, Andrew and John. Of the two sons, Andrew, the elder, took Orders. He first officiated at Kirkcaldy, and afterwards at Duffus, near Elgin, where he died. In 1780, we find Mr. John Murray writing to the widow at Duffus, condoling with her on a double sorrow—the death of her husband, and the capture of her son Archie, who had been captured by the Spaniards while on his voyage to India.

John, the younger of Robert McMurray's sons, was born at Edinburgh in 1745. After receiving a good general education, he entered the Royal Marines under the special patronage of Sir George Yonge, Bart.,\* a well-known official of the last century, and his commission as second lieutenant was dated the 24th of June, 1762. At that time England was at war with France and Austria. Pitt, Earl of Chatham, was Secretary of State and virtually Prime Minister, but Pitt resigned in 1762, and Lord Bute succeeded him. Bute's thoughts were constantly directed towards peace ; and the "Seven Years' War," as it was called, came to an end with the treaty of Paris in 1763. There was now little for the English Navy to do. Most of the war ships were laid up in ordinary ; the seamen were discharged, and the Marines took up quarters in their respective barracks.

Young MacMurray was quartered at Chatham. In the *Army List* for 1768 he was registered as second lieutenant on full pay ; and in point of seniority he was No. 34 on the list. Six years had come and gone since the Treaty of Paris had been concluded, and still he remained in the same rank as before. The monotony of this life to a young man of an active and energetic temperament

\* Sir George Yonge was Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, and subsequently Secretary at War ; he died in 1812.

became almost intolerable. At length he contemplated making a sudden change. He would retire on half-pay at the age of twenty-three, and become a London book-seller!

It is not improbable that he was induced to embark on his proposed enterprise by his recent marriage with Nancy Wemyss, daughter of Captain Wemyss, then residing at Brompton, near Chatham. Young MacMurray must have married for love and not for money, as Captain Wemyss was quite unable to assist his son-in-law with capital for his new undertaking. The captain was laid up in ordinary, like his ship, and was a victim to gout and chalk-stones.\*

While residing at Chatham, MacMurray renewed his acquaintance with William Falconer, the poet, who, like himself, was a native of Edinburgh. Falconer had been for a long time engaged in the merchant service, but in 1762, through the patronage of the Duke of York, to whom he had dedicated his poem "The Shipwreck," he obtained the rank of midshipman in the Royal Navy. After the termination of the war with France in that year his ship was laid up in ordinary at Chatham; and then he fell in with his old Edinburgh friend John MacMurray, and to relieve his weary hours, began the preparation of his well-known 'Universal Marine Dictionary.'

When the work had been completed, and while it was still in the hands of the publisher, Falconer accepted the

\* In one of Captain Wemyss's letters to Mr. MacMurray (23 Aug., 1765) he said: "If ever you come to where I am, you will almost see the devil upon two sticks. I can just make a shift at present to go down to dock and up again; afterwards to my couch like all other animals. My middle finger has altered its position from Dunnose Point to the exact make and form of Lyons Rump at the Cape of Good Hope. I save all the chalk that comes out of it, and will send it on a venture to Maryland, where the article is a scarce commodity."

position of purser of the *Aurora* frigate, ordered to proceed to India. In addition to this office he was appointed private secretary to Messrs. Vansittart, Scrofton and Forde, who were proceeding to India in the *Aurora*, to supervise the affairs of the East India Company. The ship was already at Dover, with Falconer on board, when he received the following letter from Lieutenant MacMurray, at Brompton, in which he offered to take him as a partner in the business he was about to commence. The letter is worthy of being quoted, as showing the preliminaries of the establishment of the publishing house of Murray.

*Lieutenant MacMurray to Mr. William Falconer, now  
at Dover.*

Brompton, Kent, October 16th, 1768.

DEAR WILL,

Since I saw you, I have had the intention of embarking in a scheme that I think will prove successful, and in the progress of which I had an eye towards your participating. Mr. Sandby, Bookseller, opposite St. Dunstan's Church, Fleet Street, has entered into company with Snow and Denne, Bankers. I was introduced to this gentleman about a week ago, upon an advantageous offer of succeeding him in his old business; which, by the advice of my friends, I propose to accept. Now, although I have little reason to fear success by myself in this undertaking, yet I think so many additional advantages would accrue to us both, were your forces and mine joined, that I cannot help mentioning it to you, and making you the offer of entering into company.

He resigns to me the lease of the house, the goodwill &c.; and I only take his bound stock, and fixtures, at a fair appraisement, which will not amount to much beyond £400, and which, if ever I mean to part with, cannot fail to bring in nearly the same sum. The shop has been long established in the Trade; it retains a good many old customers; and I am to be ushered immediately into public notice by the sale of a new edition of 'Lord

Lyttelton's Dialogues ;' and afterwards by a like edition of his 'History.' These Works I shall sell by commission, upon a certain profit, without risque ; and Mr. Sandby has promised to continue to me, always, his good offices and recommendations.

These are the general outlines ; and if you entertain a notion that the conjunction will suit you, advise me, and you shall be assumed upon equal terms ; for I write to you before the affair is finally settled ; not that I shall refuse it if you don't concur (for I am determined on the trial by myself) ; but that I think it will turn out better were we joined ; and this consideration alone prompts me to write to you. Many Blockheads in the Trade are making fortunes ; and did we not succeed as well as they, I think it must be imputed only to ourselves. Make Mrs. McMurray's compliments and mine to Mrs. Falconer ; we hope she has reaped much benefit from the saltwater bath. Consider what I have proposed ; and send me your answer soon. Be assured in the meantime, that I remain, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate and humble servant,

JOHN MCMURRAY.

P.S.—My advisers and directors in this affair have been Thomas Cumming, Esq., Mr. Archibald Paxton, Mr. James Paterson of Essex House, and Messrs. J. and W. Richardson, Printers. These, after deliberate reflection, have unanimously thought that I should accept Mr. Sandby's offer.

Falconer's answer to this letter has not been preserved. Perhaps he refused MacMurray's offer, being already provided, as he thought, with a certain income. At all events, he sailed from Dover in the *Aurora* frigate. The vessel touched at the Cape ; set sail again, and was never afterwards heard of. It is supposed that she was either burnt at sea, or driven northward by a storm and wrecked on the Madagascar coast. Falconer intended to have prefixed some complimentary lines to Mr. Murray to the third

edition of 'The Shipwreck,' but they were omitted in the hurry of leaving London and England for India. The 'Universal Marine Dictionary' was published by Millar at the end of 1769; and it is pleasant to have to relate of that gentleman, that he generously bestowed upon Falconer's widow many sums not stipulated for in his contract with the author.

Notwithstanding the failure of MacMurray to obtain the aid of Falconer in his partnership, he completed alone his contract with Mr. Sandby. His father at Edinburgh supplied him with the necessary capital, and he began the bookselling business in November 1768. He dropped the prefix "Mac" from his surname; put a ship in full sail at the head of his invoices; and announced himself to the public in the following terms:

"John Murray (successor to Mr. Sandby), Bookseller and Stationer, at No. 32, over against St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet Street, London, sells all new Books and Publications. Fits up Public or Private Libraries in the neatest manner with Books of the choicest Editions, the best Print, and the richest Bindings. Also, executes East India or foreign Commissions by an assortment of Books and Stationary suited to the Market or Purpose for which it is destined; all at the most reasonable rates."

Among the first books he issued were new editions of Lord Lyttelton's 'Dialogues of the Dead,' and of his 'History of King Henry the Second,' in stately quarto volumes, as well as of Walpole's 'Castle of Otranto.' He was well supported by his friends, and especially by his old brother officers, and we find many letters from all parts of the world requesting him to send consignments of books and magazines, the choice of which was, in many cases left entirely to his own discretion. In 1769 he received a letter from General Sir Robert Gordon, then in India, who



informed him that he had recommended him to many of his comrades.

*Sir R. Gordon to John Murray.*

"Brigadier-General Wedderburn has not forgotten his old school-fellow, J. McMurray. Send me British news, and inform me of all political and other affairs at home." [He also added that Colonel Mackenzie, another old friend, is to be his patron.] "I hope," says Sir R. Gordon, in another letter, "that you find more profit and pleasure from your new employment than from that of the sword, which latter, you may remember, I endeavoured to dissuade you from returning to ; but a little trial, and some further experience, at your time of life, cannot hurt you. . . . My best compliments to Mrs. Murray, who I suppose will not be sorry for your laying aside the wild Highland 'Mac' as unfashionable and even dangerous in the circuit of Wilkes's mob ; but that, I am convinced, was your smallest consideration."

The friendship of Falconer with MacMurray was instrumental in introducing the new bookseller to several distinguished authors. John Cartwright, afterwards Major, when on board H.M.S. *Wasp*, made the acquaintance of Falconer, and through him of MacMurray and others. It was no doubt through the recommendation of John Cartwright that his brother, the Rev. Dr. Cartwright, then of Marnham, near Tuxford, published through Murray, in 1770, his legendary tale of 'Armine and Elvira.' The poem was greatly admired, and went through seven editions in little more than a year. Before it came out, however, Dr. Cartwright was very apprehensive as to its fate.

*Dr. Cartwright to John Murray.*

"I shall be glad to know what is said of it. You will excuse the trouble I give you in this affair, especially when you consider the paternal anxiety that a man must unavoidably feel for the first brat that he publicly owns. I

forgot to write to Taylor [the printer], as I mentioned in my last, the alteration I wanted him to make was about the head and hair of the lover; as it is at present, he looks more like a Butcher's boy than the son of an Earl in disguise."

Dr. Cartwright, however, was much more distinguished as an inventor than as a poet. In the letter from which the above extract is made he asks Mr. Murray to go and see in Soho a machine, which he describes. He must already have been thinking of his great invention. In 1785, he took out his patent for a Power Loom, which, together with the Steam Engine of James Watt, has done so much to establish the manufacturing supremacy of Great Britain.

Dr. Cartwright having begun his academical studies at University College, Oxford, under the private tuition of Dr. John Langhorne, it was natural that Langhorne, when he had completed his translation from the French of the 'Fables of Florian,' should desire to publish the work through Mr. Murray, who had been so successful with the legendary tale of his pupil. More notable, however, was Langhorne's translation of 'Plutarch's Lives,' also published by Murray, which superseded North's translation from the French of Amyot, and eventually became a standard work.

Shortly after Mr. Murray began business, he became straitened for money. The nature of his business, and especially his consignments to distant lands, rendered it necessary for him to give long credit, while the expense and the risk of bringing out new books, added a fresh strain on his resources. In these circumstances, he applied to his friend Mr. William Kerr, Surveyor of the General Post Office for Scotland, for a loan. Mr. Kerr responded

in a kindly letter. Though he could not lend much at the time, he sent Mr. Murray £150, "lest he might be prejudiced for want of it." Mr. Kerr also sent some advice, which he thought might be useful for the young married couple.

*Mr. Wm. Kerr to John Murray.*

"Conduct your business with activity, industry, and unremitting attention, without being irritated or vexed by unavoidable accidents or incidents." [He also urged the necessity of domestic economy.] "You should know what the expense of your family is, once every week. That will be the key to you in most of your other expenses. If, in the course of my travels, any such thing as an author of repute should fall in my way, I will recommend him to you. Everything helps. I am glad you are established upon half-pay. That is always a sure little card, whatever happens."

In order to extend his business to better advantage, Mr. Murray endeavoured to form connections with booksellers in Ireland and Scotland. He employed Thomas Cumming, a Quaker mentioned in Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' who had been one of his advisers as to the purchase of Mr. Sandby's business, to push the trade in Ireland. In 1769 Cumming went to Dublin to take up an official position. While there, he endeavoured to promote his friend's bookselling connection.

*Mr. T. Cumming to John Murray.*

"On receipt of thine I constantly applied to Alderman Faulkener, and showed him the first Fable of Florian, but he told me that he would not give a shilling for any original copy whatever, as there is no law or even custom to secure any property in books in this kingdom [Ireland]. From him, I went directly to Smith and afterwards to Bradley, &c. They all gave me the same answer . . . Sorry, and very sorry I am, that I cannot send a better account of the first commission thou hast favoured me with here. Thou may'st believe that I set about it with a perfect zeal,

not lessened from the consideration of the troubles thou hast on my account, and the favours I so constantly receive from thee ; nor certainly that my good friend Dr. Langhorne was not altogether out of the question. None of the trade here will transport books at their own risque. This is not a reading, but a hard-drinking city ; 200 or 250 are as many as a bookseller, except it be an extraordinary work indeed, ever throws off at an impression."

He, however, seems to have been more fortunate with the bookseller Ewing, who gave twenty guineas for the right of republishing the '*Florian*' in Dublin, as well as for another book—both translations from the French.

In 1770, Mr. Murray made the acquaintance of Professor John Millar of Glasgow, and of the Rev. John Whitaker of Manchester. When Mr. Millar was appointed Professor of Law in 1761, the students attending his class seldom amounted to more than four or five, but, by a popular and incisive style of lecturing, he eventually created an extensive interest in the subject, and his class-room became filled with eager students. Among his pupils were Lord Jeffrey, Lord Adam, and the Earl of Lauderdale. The Professor was first introduced to Mr. Murray by Dr. Moore, father of Sir John Moore, who fell at Corunna. In his letter to the publisher he said that the MS. of Professor Millar's work had been read and revised by David Hume and Dr. Robison of Edinburgh, and that they much approved of it and recommended its publication. Mr. Murray was inclined to comply with their request, and eventually accepted the work, giving the author 100 guineas for the first edition. It was entitled '*Observations concerning the Distinction of Ranks in Society.*'

Before the work appeared there was some correspondence between the publisher and the author about a Preface. Murray wished one to appear, but Millar at first declined.

*Prof. Millar to John Murray.*

"It has the appearance of puffing. To make a preface to a book appears in the same light as to make a number of bows and scrapes as you enter a room. It always puts me in mind of what Hamlet says to the player who acts the part of the murderer—'Leave off thy damnable faces, and *begin*.' However, I should think it very improper to stick to my opinion in a matter of this sort, which it seems Mr. Murray thinks of importance, and which he imagines will affect the sale of the performance."

Professor Millar at length agreed to write the Preface, and the work was published, in 1771, in a splendid quarto volume. It proved successful, and a second edition was called for in six months. In all, the work went through four editions,\* and the publisher, in selecting such a work, had evidently made a good hit.

His next venture, with the Rev. John Whitaker of Manchester, was not so satisfactory. Mr. Murray undertook to publish the first volume of his 'History of Manchester' in 1771, but the book was a lingerer on his shelves and did not sell.

"I am sorry," said Whitaker, in June 1773, "that the quarto edition moves off slowly. But I expected nothing else. It is not a work calculated for an extempore sale, but a slowly growing one. This, however, is said principally with reference to the nation at large. For here [in Manchester], in this town of trade and merchandize, no reputation would give a large sale to any publication that required the task of thinking; and few or none of the volumes, I believe, have begun to be purchased."

\* A few years later, in 1787, Mr. Murray published for the same author his 'Historical View of the English Government, from the settlement of the Saxons in Britain to the Accession of the House of Stuart.' This work was eulogized by Fox, Jeffrey, Brougham, Hallam and Mackintosh.

Mr. Murray, in his desire to promote the success of the work, sent a copy to his friend Dr. Moore, then a young man, residing with the Duke of Hamilton at La Châtelaine, near Geneva. Moore's answer was as follows (1st July, 1773):—

“ I am sorry to perceive that the ‘ Annual Register ’ and ‘ Broomfield ’ the Surgeon's late book, are not in the list, because I mentioned them both in my note ; and I am equally surprised to see Whitaker's ‘ History of Manchester ’ there. Dear John, what do you think the Duke of Hamilton or I have to do with Manchester ? After this specimen of your taste in books, I beg that you will in future send only what is written for ; or, if you insist upon making a small addition, pray take the advice of your friend Dr. Langhorne, and neither consult your own taste, a brother bookseller, or a shopkeeper in the City ; for I suspect these last have been consulted when you chose the ‘ History of Manchester ’ ! ” \*

Dr. Gilbert Stuart, author of a ‘ Discourse on the Government and Laws of England,’ had started the *Edinburgh Magazine and Review*, of which Murray was the London publisher as well as part proprietor. But the magazine did not succeed ; it was too full of abuse. Stuart returned to London, and induced Murray to start the *English Review*. Its principal contributors were Whitaker, Dr. Moore, on his return from abroad, and others, but Stuart was found to be a very unsatisfactory person to deal with, as Isaac D'Israeli has well shown in his ‘ Calamities of Authors,’ and Mr. Murray eventually assumed the duties of editor himself.

Mr. Murray not only published the works of others, but became an author himself. He wrote two letters in the

\* Dr. Moore was afterwards the author of the novel ‘ Zeluco,’ and of many other works, some of them medical, and others relating to his travels abroad.

*Morning Chronicle* in defence of his old friend Colonel, afterwards Sir Robert Gordon, who had been censured for putting an officer under arrest during the siege of Broach, in which Gordon had led the attack. The Colonel's brother, Gordon of Gordonstown, wrote to Murray, saying, "Whether you succeed or not, your two letters are admirably written; and you have obtained great merit and reputation for the gallant stand you have made for your friend."

Colonel Gordon himself wrote a long and cordial letter to Mr. Murray (dated Bombay, 20th August, 1774), giving him his warmest thanks for defending his honour as an officer and a gentleman. "I cannot," he said, "sufficiently thank you, my dear sir, for the extraordinary zeal, activity, and warmth of friendship, with which you so strenuously supported and defended my cause, and my honour as a soldier, when attacked so injuriously by Colonel Stuart, especially when he was so powerfully supported."

In 1775, we find Murray in correspondence with Dr. John Gillies of Edinburgh, Historiographer for Scotland, respecting the publication of his translation of 'Lysias and Isocrates.'

*Dr. Gillies to John Murray.*

"I had yesterday a letter from Mr. Allan, a very good artist at Rome, who told me that he had met with two excellent busts of Lysias and Isocrates, of which he had taken drawings, and should have them immediately engraved and sent to you at London, which I had desired. As a reader, I have no great regard for ornaments in books myself, but I am persuaded you judged well, as the plates will be of considerable service to the work. I intend setting about a Greek History on the same plan, which is a thing very much wanting to our literature. I fancy you will by this time have obtained a golden cup to drink out of. Silver is good enough for Nabobs, but not for those who protect, make, and unmake them."

The latter sentence refers to Murray's defence of Sir Robert Gordon.

Dr. Gillies' works were both published ; the translation of 'Lysias and Isocrates' in 1778, and his 'History of Ancient Greece' a few years later. Mr. Mitford's 'History of Greece'—also published by Mr. Murray—appeared about the same time.

Up to this time, Mr. Murray's success had been very moderate. It was a long uphill fight to establish his reputation as a publisher. He had already brought out some successful works ; but the money came slowly in, and his chief difficulty was the want of capital. He was therefore under the necessity of refusing to publish works which might have done something to establish his reputation, and it may accordingly be conceived how delighted he was at learning the probability of his receiving some accession to his fortune.

As early as 1771, he received a letter from his friend, William Kerr of Edinburgh (who had already assisted him), as to the estate of Mount Ross or Ballypeneragh, near Belfast, left by his uncle, who had just died. The estate was to be sold, and the proceeds divided amongst his surviving relatives. On the strength of "this lucky affair," as Mr. Kerr termed it, he again lent Mr. Murray a further sum of £500, and requested his bond for the amount.

In settling this important matter—proving the will at Dublin, making arrangements for selling the estate, and in the subsequent division of the property,—it was necessary for Mr. Murray to travel frequently from London to Edinburgh, Dublin, and Belfast, and thus in a measure to neglect his business for several years. Indeed he was sometimes absent from London for three months at a time.



By the end of the year 1775 everything was put in order. The estate left by the uncle was sold by Mr. Murray for £17,000 ; and besides his fourth share of the proceeds, he was allowed £300 for his trouble and expense in managing the affair throughout. The capital he received was at once put into his business ; and from this time forward he devoted himself to its extension. He was now able to publish more important works. His prosperity, however, did not advance with rapid strides ; and in 1777 we find him writing to his friend Mr. Richardson at Oxford.

*John Murray to Mr. Richardson.*

DEAR JACK,

I am fatigued from morning till night about twopenny matters, if any of which is forgotten I am complained of as a man who minds not his business. I pray heaven for a lazy and lucrative office, and then I shall with alacrity turn my shop out of the window.

A curious controversy occurred in 1778 between Mr. Mason, executor of Thomas Gray the poet, and Mr. Murray, who had published a 'Poetical Miscellany,' in which were quoted fifty lines from three passages in Gray's works. Mr. Mason commenced an action against him in the Court of Chancery for printing these lines, as being his property. Mr. Murray published a pamphlet, entitled 'A Letter to W. Mason, A.M., Precentor of York, concerning his edition of Mr. Gray's Poems, and the Practices of Booksellers. By a Bookseller.' The pamphlet was signed "J. Murray, 32, Fleet Street." The defence was far more vigorous than the attack, and showed Mr. Murray to advantage as an author. He hit straight, and he hit home. Amongst other things, he retorted upon Mr. Mason that he had himself purloined from a publication which

was Murray's actual property, protected by copyright, more lines than Mr. Murray had extracted from the Poems of Gray. This passage Mason had inserted, without permission, in his 'Memoirs of Gray': "What trick, what device, what starting-hole can'st thou now find out, to hide thee from this open and apparent shame?"

Take a few passages from the Letter:—

"Mr. Gray, whose name as a poet stands deservedly high, had in his lifetime, at first, published his poems as he wrote them, in detached pieces. He received for these no money nor hire. He formally assigned them to no bookseller. His reward was public approbation. And a disinterested pride 'led him of all other things to despise the idea of being an author professed' (Mason's 'Memoirs of Mr. Gray')—that is, like his worthy executor, a mercenary one. Mr. Gray, then, like Shakespeare, made a present of his poems to the public. And not making them a property himself, never dreamt that another person was to erect them into a literary estate, to the exclusion of his heirs . . .

"If Mr. Mason prevails in his suit, he shuts the door at once against extracts of all kinds from new publications. If fifty lines are property, one line is property. And whether I find it in a Magazine, Review, or Newspaper, I claim it, and can prosecute for damages. Will you deny that extracts inserted in these publications, so far from injuring authors, occasion their works to be more known, and consequently to be more called for? But besides that the law is unacquainted with the distinction, I contend that the reverse of this position is the truth. For I insist that extracts from new books give sale and currency to periodical publications, without which the latter would instantly perish.

"So far from intending to violate Mr. Mason's property, I took some pains to guard against it. Different booksellers, who pretended to no exclusive right in the book, had printed the Poems in question before me. I naturally thought that they would not interfere with Mason's literary property. And from one of *their* copies did I print my edition, to avoid all cause of controversy or complaint . . . And could I believe that a man, possessed

of any degree of candour or generosity, would have proceeded to use legal violence against me *in the first instance*, after being made acquainted with these particulars of my conduct?"

This pamphlet was only published after Mr. Mason had commenced legal proceedings. When Mr. Murray received notice of them, he at once called upon Mr. Mason to explain the circumstances under which he had published the extracts, and requested him to name the terms on which he would be satisfied. Mr. Mason nevertheless proceeded with his action, and obtained an Injunction to stop the sale of the book of extracts, to the great annoyance of the publisher as well as the public.

What was thought of the matter at the time may be inferred from a conversation which occurred at the house of Mr. Dilly, the publisher, in the presence of Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Knowles "the ingenious Quaker lady," Miss Seward, the Rev. Dr. Mayo, and the Rev. Mr. Beresford. We take the passage from Boswell's 'Life':—

"Somebody mentioned the Rev. Mr. Mason's prosecution of Mr. Murray, the bookseller, for having inserted in a collection only fifty lines of Gray's Poems, of which Mr. Mason had still the exclusive property, under the Statute of Queen Anne; and that Mr. Mason had persevered, notwithstanding his being requested to name his own terms of compensation. Johnson signified his displeasure at Mr. Mason's conduct very strongly; but added, by way of showing that he was not surprised at it, 'Mason's a Whig.' Mrs. Knowles (not hearing distinctly): 'What! a prig, Sir?' Johnson: 'Worse, Madam; a Whig! But he is both!'"

Mr. Murray's friend, the Rev. John Whitaker of Manchester, also wrote to him on the subject of Mason's action.

"I suppose," he said, "that you have been engaged since I last saw you in your contest with that weak divine

(Mason). The Scotch broadsword that you wielded with so much vigour in the defence of your East Indian friend would frighten away the parson with its glitter only."

Mr. Murray had considerable intercourse with the publishers of Edinburgh, among the chief of whom were Messrs. Creech and Elliot, and by their influence he soon established a connection with the professors of Edinburgh University. Creech, who succeeded Mr. Kincaid in his business in 1773, occupied a shop in the Luckenbooths, facing down the High Street, and commanding a prospect of Aberlady Bay and the north coast of Haddingtonshire. Being situated near the Parliament House—the centre of literary and antiquarian loungers, as well as lawyers—Creech's place of business was much frequented by the gossipers, and was known as *Creech's Levee*. Creech himself, dressed in black-silk breeches, with powdered hair and full of humorous talk, was one of the most conspicuous members of the group. He was also an author, though this was the least of his merits. He was a genuine patron of literature, and gave large sums for the best books of the day.

Charles Elliot's place of business was in the Parliament Close, near which all the booksellers of Edinburgh then congregated. We introduce him here more especially, as the families of Murray and Elliot were afterwards intimately connected—the son of the one having married the daughter of the other. Elliot was related to the Elliots of Minto, by whom he was patronised and supported. He was one of the first publishers in Scotland who gave large sums for copyright. He gave Mr. Smellie a thousand pounds for his 'Philosophy of Natural History,' when only the heads of the chapters were written. He also purchased the 'First Series of the

Practice of Physic' from Dr. Cullen, and 'The System of Surgery' from Professor Bell, at large prices.

Mr. Elliot was one of Mr. Murray's principal correspondents. The latter sold in London the chief part of the medical and surgical works which the former published in Edinburgh. We find from Mr. Elliot's letters that he was accustomed to send his parcels of books to London by the Leith fleet, accompanied by an armed convoy. In June 1780, he wrote: "As the fleet sails this evening, and the schooner carries 20 guns, I hope the parcel will be in London in four or five days;" and shortly afterwards: "I am sending you four parcels of books by the *Carron*, which mounts 22 guns, and sails with the *Glasgow* of 20 guns." The reason of the Edinburgh books being conveyed to London guarded by armed ships, was that war was then raging, and that Spain, France, and Holland were united against England. The American Colonies had also rebelled, and Paul Jones, holding their commission, was hovering along the East Coast with three small ships of war and an armed brigantine. It was therefore necessary to protect the goods passing between Leith and London by armed convoys. Sometimes the vessels on their return, were quarantined for a time in Inverkeithing Bay.

Booksellers were then in the practice of interchanging catalogues, and ordering from each other an amount of books of equal value. We find Mr. Elliot sending to Mr. Murray large numbers of Cullen, Bell, Gregory, and Duncan, and writing to him in 1780, "I am about to publish a eulogium on the late great Dr. Alexander Monro, with an account of his Life, Writings, and Discoveries. I mean to make you the publisher in London. I prefer you, as you have already published the Doctor's 'Commentaries.'"

Elliot, like other publishers in England and Scotland, was grossly plundered by the Irish pirates, who printed his works and undersold him both in London and Edinburgh. To an Irish publisher, who wished him to sell books printed in Ireland, Elliot wrote in 1783, "I must, however, inform you, that, as an honest man, and conformed to the laws of his country, I cannot receive or encourage Irish books within the Statute of the 8th of Queen Anne."

It is often said of publishers that they suck the brains of authors; but authors, it seems, sometimes ransack the pockets of publishers. Dr. Cullen was a very successful author and a very thriving physician, but with regard to his authorship, he played a shabby trick upon the publishers as well as on the public. Dr. Cullen had issued three volumes of his '*Practice of Physic*,' but on the appearance of the fourth, he refused to sell it separately. Mr. Murray had many copies of the first three volumes on his hands, and he, as well as his customers, desired to have the fourth volume to complete the set. Mr. Murray having expostulated without effect, published a pamphlet, entitled, '*An Author's Conduct to the Public, Stated in the Behaviour of Dr. William Cullen, His Majesty's Physician at Edinburgh.*' The sum of his statements amounted to this—that he had upon his hands eighty-four volumes of Dr. Cullen's '*Practice of Physic*,' which would prove no better than waste paper if he was not permitted to complete them in sets; and he desired to have the new edition in exchange for the books he had, volume for volume, according to the practice of the trade.

Mr. Murray was, as we have seen, an author himself. One of his most important pamphlets was '*The Defence of Innes Monro, Esq., Captain in the late 73rd or Lord*

Macleod's Regiment of Highlanders, against a charge of plagiarism from the works of Dr. William Thompson, with the original papers on both sides.' The dispute is not worth reviving, but the whole production shows that Mr. Murray was a master of style, and wielded a powerful pen. In 1780 he began a volume of Annual Intelligence, mostly written by himself, under the title of *The London Mercury*; but this afterwards gave place to the *English Review*, of which he was for some time the sole editor.

To return, for a moment, to his personal history. His first wife having died childless, he married again. By his second wife he had three sons and two daughters, two of the sons, born in 1779 and 1781 respectively, died in infancy, while the third, John, born in 1778, is the subject of this Memoir. In 1782 he writes to his friend the Rev. John Whitaker: "We have one son and daughter, the son above four years, and the daughter above two years, both healthy and good-natured."

In June 1782 Mr. Murray had a paralytic stroke, by which he, for a time, lost the use of his left side, and though he shortly recovered, and continued his work as before, he was aware of his dangerous position. To a friend going to Madeira in September 1791, he wrote: "Whether we shall ever meet again is a matter not easily determined. The stroke by which I suffered in 1782 is only suspended; it will be repeated, and I must fall in the contest."

In the meantime Mr. Murray made arrangements for the education of his son. He was first sent for a year to the High School of Edinburgh. While there he lived with Mr. Robert Kerr, author of several works on Chemistry and Natural History, published by Mr. Murray. Having passed a year in Edinburgh, the boy returned to London, and after a time was sent to a school at Margate. There he

seems to have made some progress. To a friend Mr. Murray wrote: "He promises, I think, to write well, although his master complains a little of his indolence, which I am afraid he inherits from me. If he does not overcome it, *it* will overcome him." In a later letter he said: "The school is not the best, but the people are kind to him, and his health leaves no alternative. He writes a good hand, is fond of figures, and is coming forward both in Latin and French. Yet he inherits a spice of indolence, and is a little impatient in his temper. His appearance—open, modest, and manly—is much in his favour. He is grown a good deal, and left us for Margate (after his holiday) as happy as could be expected."

In the course of the following year, Mr. Murray sent the boy to a well-known school at Gosport, kept by Dr. Burney, one of his old friends. Burney was a native of the North of Ireland, and had originally been called MacBurney, but, like Murray, he dropped the Mac.

While at Dr. Burney's school, young Murray had the misfortune to lose the sight of his right eye. The writing-master was holding his penknife awkwardly in his hand, point downwards, and while the boy, who was showing up an exercise, stooped to pick up the book which had fallen, the blade ran into his eye and entirely destroyed the sight. To a friend about to proceed to Gosport, Mr. Murray wrote: "Poor John has met with a sad accident, which you will be too soon acquainted with when you reach Gosport. His mother is yet ignorant of it, and I dare not tell her."

Eventually the boy was brought to London for the purpose of ascertaining whether something might be done by an oculist for the restoration of his sight. But the cornea had been too deeply wounded; the fluid of the eye had



escaped ; nothing could be done for his relief, and he remained blind in that eye to the end of his life. His father withdrew him from Dr. Burney's school, and sent him in July 1793 to the Rev. Dr. Roberts, at Loughborough House, Kennington. In committing him to the schoolmaster's charge, Mr. Murray sent the following introduction :—

“ Agreeable to my promise, I commit to you the charge of my son, and, as I mentioned to you in person, I agree to the terms of fifty guineas. The youth has been hitherto well spoken of by the gentleman he has been under. You will find him sensible and candid in the information you may want from him ; and if you are kind enough to bestow pains upon him, the obligation on my part will be lasting. The branches to be learnt are these: Latin, French, Arithmetic, Mercantile Accounts, Elocution, History, Geography, Geometry, Astronomy, the Globes, Mathematics, Philosophy, Dancing, and Martial Exercise.”

Certainly, a goodly array of learning, knowledge, and physical training !

To return to the history of Mr. Murray's publications. Some of his best books were published after the stroke of paralysis which he had sustained, and among them must be mentioned Mitford's 'History of Greece,' Lavater's work on Physiognomy, and the first instalment of Isaac D'Israeli's 'Curiosities of Literature.'

Besides his publication of these and other works, he paid much attention to the *English Review*, established by him in 1783, which has already been mentioned. He found out literary men, and invited them to contribute to its pages. For instance, we find him writing to Sir Robert Liston, then Secretary to the British Embassy at Turin, asking for his assistance. In his letter, he informed Sir Robert that the publication contained reviews of foreign

books, papers on literary news, and accounts of discoveries in arts, science, and manufactures.

In July 1783, we find Mr. Murray taking proceedings at Edinburgh against the publishers of the '*Encyclopædia Britannica*,' for embodying almost verbatim an abridgment of Dr. Stuart's '*History of the Reformation in Scotland*,' and the '*History of Scotland*' during the reign of Queen Mary. Murray advised his solicitors to apply for an interdict, and to claim compensation. In a later letter, he writes :—

"I think you have done everything in our prosecution that can be done. The act of piracy cannot fail to be established by the comparison of the *Encyclopædia* with Dr. Stuart's volumes ; and I hope the interdict of Lord Monboddo will stop the sale of the volume complained of until further satisfaction be obtained."

In a letter to the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, dated the 20th of Dec., 1784, the following passage occurs :

"Poor Dr. Johnson's remains passed my door for interment this afternoon. They were accompanied by thirteen mourning coaches with four horses each ; and after these a cavalcade of the carriages of his friends. He was about to be buried in Westminster Abbey."

In 1784 the Rev. Alexander Fraser of Kirkhill, near Inverness, communicated to Mr. Murray his intention of publishing the *Memoirs of Lord Lovat*, the head of his clan. Mr. Fraser's father had received the *Memoirs* in manuscript from Lord Lovat, with an injunction to publish them after his death. "My father," he said, "had occasion to see his Lordship a few nights before his execution, when he again enjoined him to publish the *Memoirs*." General Fraser, a prisoner in the Castle of Edinburgh, had

requested, for certain reasons, that the publication should be postponed ; but the reasons no longer existed, and the Memoirs were soon after published by Mr. Murray, but did not meet with any success.

In 1790 Mr. Murray made the acquaintance of young Leslie, afterwards Sir John Leslie, then tutor in the house of Mr. Wedgwood at Etruria in Staffordshire, and made arrangements with him for publishing the translation of 'Buffon's Natural History of Birds,' which appeared in 1793, in nine octavo volumes. After sending the manuscript to London, Leslie made a tour in Holland and Germany with Mr. Thomas Wedgwood—whose early death he greatly lamented as a loss to science and his country. Josiah Wedgwood, with his ever prominent liberality, conferred an annuity of £150 on John Leslie for the careful instruction which he had given to his sons. The sum he received for Buffon laid the foundation of that pecuniary independence, which his prudent habits enabled him early to attain.

Full of energy, and with the desire to labour, we find Leslie writing to Mr. Murray about a paper on Electricity for the *English Review*. He next suggested the production of the 'History of the Discovery, Settlement, and Progress of the Colonization of North America' on which Mr. Murray ventured to suggest another subject, 'The History of the European Trade and Settlements in India.' In 1793 Leslie proposed a 'Dictionary of Chemistry,' at three guineas a sheet, a work which he eventually carried out, and in the same year, Mr. Murray published his 'Essays on Natural Philosophy' in one volume. It was not until the year 1805 that he was, after considerable opposition, elected to the Professorship of Natural Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh ; a position in which,

through his discoveries in Natural Science, he achieved the greatest eminence.

The publisher went on with his business, sometimes earning, sometimes losing. A cargo of his books was lost by shipwreck on passing from Leith to London. The publication of 'Lavater on Physiognomy' in parts, a costly work, largely illustrated, resulted in a heavy loss.

Mr. J. Beddowes, then at Edinburgh, translated for Mr. Murray 'Scheele's Essays,' for which he paid him sixty guineas. "I shall now," he wrote to Beddowes, "have three works in progress at Edinburgh. Until these are finished I will not be tempted with more adventures, for the success of the best works is precarious." Murray had much correspondence with Professor Millar of Glasgow as to the publication of his works, and in November 1785 wrote to him :

"I am sorry to say that the generality of authors first apply for a publisher's offer and afterwards parade it amongst other publishers to get better terms. But as there appears to be both candour and honour in your correspondence, I will give you £100 immediately (without having seen the MS.) and divide profits, you retaining half the copyright."

About the same time he writes to Dr. R. Robertson, of Hythe, near Southampton :

"I have always found it more difficult to settle accounts with a gentleman author than with a bookseller, although I generally give more liberal terms to the former than to the latter. The reason is, that gentlemen being unacquainted with the nature of bookselling (which, indeed, cannot be taken up in a moment), are constantly suspicious of every charge which they do not understand, and asking explanations about it, which to a bookseller is unnecessary and never required."

Mr. Murray made frequent visits to Edinburgh, on business as well as pleasure, usually going by land, notwithstanding the badness of the roads and the tediousness of the journey. The war with France was still raging, and the French were endeavouring to seize the merchant vessels passing along the coast, even when accompanied by an armed squadron. In March 1793 Mr. Robert Kerr of Edinburgh, when sending to Mr. Murray his work on Zoology, said,

“My third half-volume is ready, and shall be sent to you as soon as a regular armed convoy is established between Leith and London ; for much as I respect the French I am not disposed to favour them with any of my labours *gratis*.”

The distressed state of trade and the consequent anxieties of conducting his business hastened Mr. Murray's end. Mr. Samuel Highley was his principal assistant and the correspondent of the firm. In September 1793 Highley wrote to a correspondent: “A severe fit of illness has confined Mr. Murray to his bed for five weeks past. He has also been much distressed by the late failures at Edinburgh.”

The end soon came. On the 6th of November Highley wrote to his correspondent: “Mr. Murray died this day after a long and painful illness, and appointed as executors Dr. G. A. Paxton, Mrs. Murray, and Samuel Highley. The business hereafter will be conducted by Mrs. Murray.” The Rev. Donald Grant, D.D. and George Noble, Esq., were also executors, but the latter did not act.

The income of the property was divided as follows: one half to the education and maintenance of Mr. Murray's three children, and the other half to his wife so long as she remained a widow. But in the event of her marrying

again, her share was to be reduced by one-third and her executorship was to cease.

John Murray began his publishing career at the age of twenty-three. He was twenty-five years in business, and died at the comparatively early age of forty-eight. That publishing books is not always a money-making business may be inferred from the fact that during these twenty-five years he did not, with all his industry, double his capital. Perhaps his last enterprise was his worst—the publication of Lavater's work on Physiognomy. The engraving of the plates caused the principal part of the loss. The executors put the case to arbitration, and were eventually compelled to pay out of the estate the sum of £3900. The *English Review* was by no means a paying publication; but on the death of Mr. Murray it passed into other hands.

## CHAPTER II.

JOHN MURRAY (II.)—BEGINNING OF HIS PUBLISHING CAREER.—ISAAC D'ISRAELI, ETC.

JOHN MURRAY THE SECOND—the “Anak of Publishers,” according to Lord Byron—was born on the 27th of November, 1778. He was his father's only surviving son by his second marriage, and being only fifteen at his father's death, was too young to enter upon the business of the firm, which was carried on by Samuel Highley—the “faithful shopman” mentioned in the elder Murray's will—for the benefit of his widow and family. What his father thought of him, of his health, spirits, and good nature, will have been seen from the preceding chapter.

Young Murray returned to school, and remained there for about two years longer, until the marriage of his mother to Lieutenant Henry Paget, of the West Norfolk Militia, on the 28th of September, 1795, when he returned to 32, Fleet Street, to take part in the business. Mrs. Paget ceased to be an executor, retired from Fleet Street, and went to live at Bridgenorth with her husband, taking her two daughters—Jane and Mary Anne Murray—to live with her, and receiving from time to time the money necessary for their education.

The executors secured the tenancy of No. 32, Fleet Street, part of the stock and part of the copyrights, for the firm of Murray and Highley, between whom a partner-

ship was concluded in 1795, though Murray was still a minor. In the circumstances Mr. Highley of course took the principal share of the management, but though a very respectable person, he was not much of a business man, and being possessed by an almost morbid fear of running any risks, he brought out no new works, took no share in the new books that were published, and it is doubtful whether he looked very sharply after the copyrights belonging to the firm. He was mainly occupied in selling books brought out by other publishers.

The late Mr. Murray had many good friends in India, who continued to send home their orders to the new firm of Murray and Highley. Amongst them were Warren Hastings and Joseph Hume. Hume had taken out with him an assortment of books from the late Mr. Murray, which had proved very useful; and he wrote to Murray and Highley for more. Indeed, he became a regular customer for books.

Meanwhile Murray fretted very much under the careless and indifferent management of Highley. The executors did not like to be troubled with his differences with his partner, and paid very little attention to him or his affairs. Since his mother's remarriage and removal to Bridgenorth, the young man had literally no one to advise with, and was compelled to buffet with the troubles and difficulties of life alone. Though inexperienced, he had, however, spirit and common sense enough to see that he had but little help to expect from his partner, and the difficulties of his position no doubt contributed to draw forth and develop his own mental energy. He was not a finished scholar, but had acquired a thorough love of knowledge and literature, and a keen perception of the beauties of our great English classics, in which he had been



much encouraged by his half-brother Archibald Murray, who became a Purser in the Royal Navy. By acquiring and cultivating a purity of taste, he laid the foundations of that quick discrimination, which, combined with his rapidly growing knowledge of men and authors, rendered him afterwards so useful, and even powerful, in the pursuit of his profession.

Mr. Murray came of age on the 27th of November, 1799 ; but he was prudent enough to continue with Highley for a few years longer. After four years more, he determined to set himself free to follow his own course, and the innumerable alterations and erasures in his own rough draft of the following letter testify to the pains and care which he bestowed on this momentous step.

*John Murray to Mr. Highley.*

MR. HIGHLEY,—

Great Queen St.  
Friday, Nov. 19, 1802.

I propose to you that our partnership should be dissolved on the twenty-fifth day of March next :

That the disposal of the lease of the house and every other matter of difference that may arise respecting our dissolution shall be determined by arbitrators—each of us to choose one—and that so chosen they shall appoint a third person as umpire whom they may mutually agree upon previous to their entering upon the business :

I am willing to sign a bond to this effect immediately, and I think that I shall be able to determine my arbitrator some day next week.

As I know this proposal to be as fair as one man could make to another in a like situation, and in order to prevent unpleasant altercation or unnecessary discussion, I declare it to be the last with which I intend to trouble you.

I take this opportunity of saying that, however much we may differ upon matters of business, I most sincerely wish you well.

JOHN MURRAY.

In the end they agreed to draw lots for the house, and Murray had the good fortune to remain at No. 32, Fleet Street. Mr. Highley removed to No. 24 in the same street, and took with him, by agreement, the principal part of the medical works of the firm. Mr. Murray now started on his own account, and began a career of publication almost unrivalled in the history of letters.

Although he consulted many surgeons, Murray never regained the sight of his right eye. "What?" said Chantrey the sculptor to him one day, after a long acquaintance, "are you a brother Cyclops?" To a sculptor, the loss of the sight of one eye must have been a very formidable hindrance, but to a publisher of books, provided he have brains enough, the loss is not nearly so great. As his nephew, Robert Cooke, afterwards said: "Mr. Murray could see sharper with one eye than most other people can with two."

Before the dissolution of partnership, Mr. Murray had seen the first representation of Colman's Comedy of "John Bull" at Covent Garden Theatre, and was so fascinated by its "union of wit, sentiment, and humour," that the day after its representation he wrote to Mr. Colman, and offered him £300 for the copyright. No doubt Mr. Highley would have thought this a rash proceeding.

*John Murray to Mr. Colman.*

"The truth is that during my minority I have been shackled to a drone of a partner; but the day of emancipation is at hand. On the twenty-fifth of this month (March 1803) I plunge alone into the depths of literary speculation. I am therefore honestly ambitious that my first appearance before the public should be such as will at once stamp my character and respectability. On this account, therefore, I think that your Play would be more advantageous to me than to any other bookseller; and as 'I

am not covetous of Gold,' I should hope that no trifling consideration will be allowed to prevent my having the honour of being Mr. Colman's publisher. You see, sir, that I am endeavouring to interest your feelings, both as a Poet and as a Man."

Mr. Colman replied in a very pleasant letter, thanking Mr. Murray for his very liberal offer.

*Mr. Colman to John Murray.*

"But," he added, "I am more pleased (strange as the assertion may be from a poor poet) by the *manner* of your proposition than by its solidity. . . . When a play has passed the public ordeal, it is the custom to offer the refusal of the copyright to the proprietor of the theatre in which it has been produced; and in addition to considerations of custom, I owe this attention to Mr. Harris on other accounts."

The result was, that the proprietor of the theatre retained the copyright of "John Bull," and thereby disappointed Mr. Murray in the publication of the play as his first independent venture in business.

Six days after the dissolution of partnership, Murray addressed the Rev. Edmund Cartwright, already mentioned in the previous chapter, in these terms:—

*John Murray to Rev. E. Cartwright.*

March 31st, 1803.

DEAR SIR,

I have much pleasure in acquainting you that my partnership being dissolved, the obstacle which has hitherto prevented me from entering upon any works of merit is now removed, and I should be very happy, if it be agreeable to you, to make some arrangement for the publication of a new edition of 'Armine and Elvira,'\* with a

\* The legendary tale of 'Armine and Elvira' originally appeared in 1787. Mrs. Fletcher, in her Autobiography, thus refers to the author:—"While visiting Doncaster (in 1788) I incidentally became acquainted with the Rev. Edmund Cartwright, who had lately pub-

selection of your other poems. It has cost me so much more than I could well afford to pay to retain the house of my father, that I am not over-rich at present. But I am willing, if you please to take one half of the risk of publication, and divide with you the profits which may arise when the impression is sold. The actual profit upon so small a work will not be much, but it will serve to keep your name before the world as a favourite poet.

The times, however, were very bad. Money was difficult to be had on any terms, and Mr. Murray had a hard task to call in the money due to Murray and Highley, as well as to collect the sums due to himself. To the Rev. Mr. Hodgson of Market Rasen he wrote :—

“ That he had already exceeded the term of credit which he could allow ; and really the times press so heavily by reason of taxes, failures, and the stagnation of trade, that he should feel very thankful for an early remittance. Besides, many of the books he had sent to Mr. Hodgson more than a year before had been old and scarce, and that he (Mr. Murray) had already paid for them in ready money.”

Mr. Joseph Hume had not been very prompt in settling his accounts ; and Mr. Murray wrote to him accordingly, on the 11th of July, 1804 :—

“ On the other side is a list of books (amount £92 8s. 6d.), containing all those for which you did me the favour to

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lished a legendary tale, ‘ *Armine and Elvira*,’ along with other poems of considerable merit. . . . He was a grave-looking man, considerably turned of forty, of very gentle and engaging manners. He was acquainted with the family with whom we had spent the day, and he accompanied us to their house to pass the evening ; and the next day he took us to see some power-loom of his invention—set to work, not by steam or water, but by a large wheel turned by an ox. . . . He honoured me with his confidence and friendship so far as to wish me to become the mother of his five amiable children by uniting my fate to his. I had not confidence in my own worthiness for such a trust, but in refusing it, I neither forfeited his good opinion nor his friendship.”

write : and I trust that they will reach you safely. . . . If in future you could so arrange that my account should be paid by some house in town within six months after the goods are shipped, I shall be perfectly satisfied, and shall execute your orders with much more despatch and pleasure. I mention this, not from any apprehension of not being paid, but because my circumstances will not permit me to give so large an extent of credit. It affords me great pleasure to hear of your advancement ; and I trust that your health will enable you to enjoy all the success to which your talents entitle you."

He was, for the same reason, under the necessity of declining to publish several new works offered to him, especially those dealing with medical and poetical subjects.

On one occasion he wrote to Mr. Bidlake, who asked to have his remaining poems published.

"The threat of invasion, and the magnitude of our taxes, fill the mind with apprehension, and swallow up the sums that have been usually appropriated to literature. . . . I am really so hemmed in by literary engagements, that I do not think I shall be able to publish any more on my own account for some time ; and I expect to lose considerably from the present unfavourable aspect of the times."

Mr. Archibald Constable of Edinburgh, and Messrs. Bell and Bradfute, Mr. Murray's agents in Edinburgh, were also communicated with as to the settlement of their accounts with Murray and Highley. "I expected," he said, "to have been able to pay my respects to you both this summer (1803), but my *military duties*, and the serious aspect of the times, oblige me to remain at home." What Mr. Murray's "military duties" were, may be easily explained.

Napoleon Buonaparte had declared war against England. He had arrested and imprisoned about 10,000 British subjects then residing in France. His "Army of England"

was then assembled on the heights near Boulogne ; and the broad-bottomed boats were in readiness to ferry over the French troops to the shores of England. The most enthusiastic patriotism was exhibited throughout the country. No less than 300,000 men enrolled themselves in volunteer corps and associations. In London alone, the volunteer corps numbered 12,500, at a time when the metropolis contained less than half its present population. They were reviewed in Hyde Park in the summer of 1803 ; and amongst them was John Murray, Ensign in the 3rd Regiment of Royal London Volunteers.

Although Mr. Murray necessarily gave much of his time to drill and military work, he continued to take increasing interest in his publishing affairs. Being desirous of extending more widely the knowledge of Dr. Jenner's great discovery of vaccination for the prevention of the ravages of Small-pox, he wrote the following letter to Dr. Ring on the subject :---

*Mr. John Murray to Dr. Ring.*

August, 1803.

DEAR SIR,

I am so fully convinced of the advantages that would arise to the cause of vaccination, from any publication from the pen of Dr. Jenner, that I am more than ever surprised that he is not induced to give to the public a less expensive edition of his useful treatise, in a more portable form. At present its size and price preclude it from general circulation, and the consequence is, that it is superseded by numerous other publications, to the authors of which accrue that honour and emolument which otherwise might have rested with the glorious discoverer alone.

Should Dr. Jenner allow himself to be persuaded of the truth of this remark, I should feel myself much flattered to be employed in the execution of a plan which might be made to answer the end that I propose, without occasioning to Dr. Jenner either expense or trouble. I will undertake

at my own cost to print a large impression of Dr. Jenner's work in a popular form, and will cause it to be circulated through the medium of my correspondents, in England, Scotland, Ireland, and the Continent ; and when the whole is sold, I will give Dr. Jenner two-thirds of the clear profits. In this proposal I have considered the cause which I should serve and the honour of being Dr. Jenner's publisher, rather than my own immediate emolument ; and I should not feel displeased if it were mentioned to any other bookseller.

At the same time I can assure you with great sincerity, that I do not think there is in the whole trade a more regular or more respectable man than Mr. Hurst ; but as I am professedly a Medical Bookseller, I am really anxious to be the publisher of so important a work.

Dr. Jenner's work does not appear to have been brought out by Mr. Murray, but he published about this time Dr. Graves's '*Pharmacopœia*.' When it was proposed that the name of his late partner Highley should be included in the imprint, Murray objected.

"I cannot," he said, "suffer my name to stand with his for two reasons—first, because he advertises himself as 'successor to the late John Murray,' who died not less than ten years ago, with the intent to make the public believe that I, his son, have either retired from business, or am dead. That this wicked insinuation has had this effect, I have the letters of two or three persons to prove. And secondly,—because he undersells all other publishers at the regular and advertised prices."

In conclusion, Mr. Murray said :—

"Make the case your own—'*utrum horum mavis accipe*.' However you may determine in this matter, you may rely upon my interest to promote the sale of your work ; and I request that you will do me the favour to send me 100 copies as soon as it is ready, for which I will pay you whenever you call upon me."

Publishers suffered much from the general depression of trade during the war. Among other failures was that of Mr. Murray's friends, Messrs. G. and J. Robinson. In order to assist them, he corresponded with the booksellers throughout the country, offering to take care of their interests, until the Robinsons had arranged their affairs so as to recommence their business transactions.

Besides his medical works, Mr. Murray sought to extend his connection in bringing out those of a miscellaneous character. He published for Mr. Williams, of Plymouth, his '*Picturesque Excursions*,' and for Nathaniel Howard, of the same place, his volume of poems. The latter book was to be sold at 5*s.*, and the author expected that the publisher would receive 1*s.* 6*d.* profit on every copy sold. It was accordingly necessary to undeceive the over-sanguine author. "What you infer might be the case if I sold every copy at 5*s.* But when another publisher wants a copy, I sell it to him at three-fifths the price. He sells it to a bookseller in the country, and he perhaps to another, or to a schoolmaster, all of whom must have a certain allowance. You will find a very satisfactory letter on the subject in Boswell's '*Life of Johnson*.'"

Towards the end of 1803 Mr. Murray published the '*Revolutionary Plutarch*.' This remarkable work, written by a French officer, but published anonymously, soon passed into a second and third edition. It contained brief memoirs, or sketches drawn by no friendly hand, of all the members of the Buonaparte family, and those who had aided in their rise to the supreme power. It formed, in short, a biographical history of the French Revolution. We gather Mr. Murray's views about the work from his letter to Messrs. Gilbert and Hodges, booksellers, Dublin:—



*John Murray to Messrs. Gilbert and Hodges.*

“A recent occurrence in Dublin, respecting the publication of a too favourable account of Buonaparte, has led me to suppose that the volumes of the ‘*Revolutionary Plutarch*’ will meet with a favourable reception in Ireland; I have therefore doubled the number which you did me the favour to order, in hopes of saving the expense of carriage, should there be a demand for them. They are charged to you at a reduced price, in order to encourage your exertions to promote their circulation. I wish it to be advertised twice in each of your best papers, both morning and evening. I did inclose in the parcel the form of an advertisement; but since that, it has been rendered more attractive by the insertion of the names of the Buonaparte family, and this latter I wish to be used. The work is original; and as it has been written with a view of exhibiting to the minds of the wavering a true portrait of the villainies of the present rulers of the French Republic, in opposition to a work which extols their abilities and brilliant exploits, I think it should be entitled to the patronage of the loyal in Ireland.”

Mr. Murray forwarded a copy of this work to Mr. Addington, whose administration had terminated in the previous May, accompanied by the following letter.

*John Murray to Right Hon. H. Addington.*

SIR,

32, Fleet Street,  
September 5th, 1804.

The accompanying volumes were written at a time when your judicious administration had roused the patriotic exertions of every citizen. Their object was to exhibit to the public mind a faithful picture of the crimes of the rulers of the French Republic, and to excite against them a just abhorrence. As their quick and extensive circulation leads me to suppose that they may have effected some service, I presume to offer a copy of them to you as the prime cause of it, and as my mite of respect to a truly

great man under whose administration I lived with so much confidence and comfort.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your most obedient, humble servant,  
JOHN MURRAY.

To this Mr. Addington replied as follows :—

*Right Hon. Henry Addington to John Murray.*

Richmond Park, Oct. 1st, 1804.

SIR,

Having been absent from home for several weeks, I did not receive till Saturday last your acceptable present and the letter with which it was accompanied, for each of which you are entitled to my sincere thanks. The publication is highly interesting, and calculated to produce the most useful effects. I cannot forbear adding that I feel the value of those favourable sentiments which you have had the goodness to express towards myself.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient, humble servant,  
HENRY ADDINGTON.

The work was followed by the ‘Memoirs of Talleyrand’ and the ‘Female Plutarch’; the latter of which Mr. Murray published in conjunction with the Messrs. Longman and Co. These books were not, in his opinion, so satisfactory as the ‘Revolutionary Plutarch.’ In writing to his fellow-publishers he said :—

*John Murray to Messrs. Longman.*

“I regret that the ‘Memoirs of Talleyrand’ and ‘The Female Plutarch’ have not added to a respectability of which, like yourselves, I am exceedingly tenacious. Indeed, the many improper passages which have been suffered to appear in the volumes alluded to, have subjected my name to aspersions which, I confess, I very little expected to have been the result of a confidence in gentlemen, to whose friendship and liberality upon other occa-

sions I feel so much indebted. . . . I propose, with your approval, to omit the improprieties in the 'Memoirs of Talleyrand.' ”

Mr. Murray afterwards got rid of both the 'Memoirs' and the 'Female Plutarch,' and refused to sell any more copies of the works. He preferred to publish books of a more solid character—Travels, Voyages, medical and philosophical works. In 1805, we find him printing a splendid new edition of 'Bruce's Travels,' in seven volumes octavo, with a Life of the author.

It is necessary here to introduce a name which constantly appears in the records of Mr. Murray's career, and a friendship which was only interrupted by a series of untoward events to be narrated in a subsequent chapter.

It cannot now be ascertained what was the origin of the acquaintance between the D'Israeli and Murray families. The first John Murray published the first volumes of Isaac D'Israeli's 'Curiosities of Literature,' and though no correspondence between them has been preserved, we find frequent mention of the founder of the house in Isaac D'Israeli's letters to John Murray the Second. His experiences are held up for his son's guidance, as for example, when Isaac, urging the young publisher to support some petition to the East India Company, writes, "It was a ground your father trod, and I suppose that connection cannot do you any harm;" or again, when dissuading him from undertaking some work submitted to him, "You can mention to Mr. Harley the fate of Professor Musæus' 'Popular Tales,' which never sold, and how much your father was disappointed." On another occasion we find D'Israeli, in 1809, inviting his publisher to pay a visit "to my father, who will be very glad to see you at Margate."

The earliest letter which can be found is addressed to the firm of Murray and Highley as follows:—

*Mr. Isaac D'Israeli to Messrs. Murray & Highley.*

Exeter, March 3rd, 1796.

GENTLEMEN,

I think it very incumbent on me to inform you that a book published by Ridgways, called 'A Dictionary of Literary Conversation,' is a mere republication *ad verbatim*, of many articles from 'The Curiosities,' with a very few new articles of their own. The book has sold very rapidly, and is now in a second edition. They threaten another volume. If they go on publishing 'The Curiosities' at a cheaper rate, and you tamely submit to it, there is an end of all literary property. I have just now written a note to the *Monthly Review* and the *British Critic* to notice this depredation. All this I conceive to be my duty. The work is your own, and not mine. If you act in this affair at all, I shall be glad to know what will be done. If you want any information further, you may write to me.

I am, gentlemen, yours, &c.

I. D'ISRAELI.

What the result of this remonstrance was we have now no means of discovering, but when young John Murray started in business on his own account, his acquaintance with D'Israeli, who was twelve years his senior, soon ripened into an intimate friendship. A very large mass of letters, notes, and scraps of memoranda testify to the constant, almost daily communication which was kept up between them, for D'Israeli, in addition to his own work, very soon became the literary adviser to his friend.

In Oct. 1803, he writes, "By letter from Margate" (where his father was then living) "I find a cutter had yesterday come into the Downs with a number of *wounded men* and for reinforcements. This does not appear in the *Times* nor *Press* this morning. It shows we have sustained

loss of men, however, and the action was very hot. I hope to hear to-day that these gun-boats have not escaped us after all."

In 1804 Mr. D'Israeli was engaged upon a work which is now all but forgotten, and of which Lord Beaconsfield does not seem to have been aware, as he makes no mention of it in the Memoir of his father prefixed to the 'Curiosities of Literature' in 1865.

The author, however, as is evident from his constant allusions to it, and his anxiety about its success, attached great importance to this book, which was entitled 'Flim-Flams! or the Life and Errors of my Uncle, and the Amours of my Aunt, with Illustrations and Obscurities, by Messrs. Tag, Rag, and Bobtail.' The work is rather ridiculous, and it is difficult now to discern its purpose, or even the humour on which the author would appear to have prided himself. It is slightly in imitation of Sterne; but without his sentiment, wit or humour.

In April 1804, D'Israeli writes:—

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

The last letter you wrote, was received at a moment that I could not properly attend to it. I am extremely obliged by the real solicitude you have shown on the occasion—nor has it been entirely useless. I have had that proof returned and made two or three additional touches, besides retaining the rejected note of the *Edinburgh Review* which I like well. You are probably too *deeply* engaged in *serious business* at the present moment, to attend to such *Nugæ* and flim-flams as the world are on the point of being *illuminated* by.

However, I write this, to give you some *hopes*. I confided the three sheets printed to two friends, and I have every reason to believe I succeed to the best of my wishes. One writes me, that it will "provoke *perpetual laughter* and

at the same time preserve a great deal of *curious information*." I have observed how it worked upon a *grave mind* (the friend who read carefully the sheets before me). He acknowledges the *satire* to be very just and *much wanted*; and is of opinion that a *volume annually* of the same kind, would be a pleasant companion to the *Literati*. What I liked better than his opinion—he laughed most seriously! However every year cannot produce such a heap of *extravaganzas* as I have registered, nor so merry a crew of lunatics, as I shall have the honour of putting into a procession.

As I have written an account of the *death* of the author—who *dies with laughter*—whom nothing can revive but the *galvanic science* of *Professor Murray*, I must consult you on this before it is printed. I mention that I prefer you to *Professor Dary*, because by many *patient experiments* you, to my knowledge, have more than once restored a *dead author to life*!

There was no avoiding Clarke's\* knowing I was the author, nor the printer. In the present case we must trust to their *honour*, for, as Mark Antony says—"They are all honourable men!"

Mrs. D'I. is most sensible to your enquiries and has taken it into her profound views that you have gone off† to be *married*! and though I speak so much in favour of your wisdom, still she thinks it will so end.

Again he writes on the eve of publication: "I think the third volume abounds with that kind of story or incident which will be found entertaining."

The work appeared in due course in the early part of 1805, but it was never appreciated by the public; it was severely criticised in the *Critical Review*, and the author's exaggerated expectations gave place to the deepest disappointment. "An idea has spread abroad," he writes, "that the F. F. is a libel. Longman and Rees will not suffer the book to lie on their table. I wrote to know if

\* Mr. Murray's head clerk.

† Mr. Murray was then residing at Hartley Row in Hampshire.

the *Edinburgh Review* really considers it a libel whether we ought not to retain Erskine.”

No libel action, however, was brought, and in due course a second edition, “with an apology for the author and the work” was prepared, but here again D’Israeli’s nervous anxiety is displayed in the following letters :—

*Mr. D’Israeli to John Murray.*

“It is absolutely necessary to stop going on with our second edition.

“Your personal interest is more deeply involved in this, than mine. You will incur a great risk, which I have very strong doubts will never be repaid.

“Secondly, my own ease of mind is as much as possible at risk. The work certainly gives great offence to many ; the execution is at times most bunglingly performed, and I am convinced the curiosity of a certain part of the public was stirred, which occasioned the demand. Whatever real merits may be in the work are entirely outnumbered by the errors of its author.

“The printer has only done three sheets, perhaps a fourth. These sheets may at present be deposited in your warehouse. The expense of the printer may be divided between us, or I will repay you. Dagley\* I will undertake myself to satisfy.

“I have maturely considered this affair. To prevent a serious loss to you, and deep vexation for myself, I have immediately hit on this plan. What has just passed cannot be recalled, and I will bear the consequences.

“Pray then return the MS. ; stop the printer.

“If it were really necessary, the work might be resumed a year hence. If there’s no second edition, no other reason need be given than that the authors would not give any.

“When it is out of print, if ever the few on hand are sold, it may be more talked of; at present the current runs all against it.”

\* The engraver.

*Mr. D'Israeli to Mr. Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I begin to think the book is *not half so bad* as some choose to think. What I am doing will convince you, that I want not spirit and confidence, as well as modesty and timidity. I am preparing to set down. I hugely like my address to be prefixed to the *Second Edition*, which I am putting in order. I am certain that the Second Edition will be improved, but I wish also to have wit enough to convince the Wronghead family, in this new preface, that the *odium* they would throw on me is *unjust*. You will judge how I succeed in this.

I. D'I.

*Mr. D'Israeli to Mr. Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I sent you an alteration for the advertisement, to run thus—"To this edition is prefixed an APOLOGY for the AUTHOR and the BOOK."

Since yesterday I have now the satisfaction of adding that the Apology is quite finished—and to my content! I do think it to be much superior to anything in the work itself; and I am very desirous of you and Dr. Grant seeing it. It is very entertaining; I think the *sense* is not heavy, and the *humour* genuine and pointed. I am sure there are several original views in it, as the whole is a defence of 'Flim-Flamming.' I think it ought to be expressed thus in the advertisement.

You mentioned something about the Doctor's dining at your house to-morrow. Does he? I am going to the Institution to hear Mr. Dibdin on British Literature.

Yours,

I. D'I.

The foregoing correspondence has been printed as illustrating the character of a remarkable man, and throwing light on a little known episode of his literary career.

Besides the 'Curiosities of Literature,' and 'Flim-Flams,' Mr. D'Israeli published through Murray, in 1803, a small volume of 'Narrative Poems' in 4to. They con-



sisted of "An Ode to his Favourite Critic;" "The Carder and the Currier, a Story of Amorous Florence;" "Coming, a Story of La Trappe;" and "A Tale addressed to a Sybarite." The verses in these poems run smoothly, but they contain no wit, no poetry, nor even any story. They were never again reprinted.

Before leaving the year 1804 it is necessary to print the following letter, which is of especial interest, as fixing the date of an event which has given rise to much discussion—the birth of Benjamin D'Israeli.

*Mr. Isaac D'Israeli to John Murray.*

Dec. 22nd, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR,

Mrs. D'Israeli will receive particular gratification from the interesting note you have sent us on the birth of our boy—when she shall have read it. In the meanwhile accept my thanks, and my best compliments to your sister. The mother and infant are both doing well.

Ever yours,  
I. D'I.

The following letters will afford an insight into the nature of the friendship and business relations which existed between Isaac D'Israeli and his young publisher as well as into the characters of the two men themselves.

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

Brighton, August 5th, 1805.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter is one of the repeated specimens I have seen of your happy art of giving interest even to commonplace correspondence; and I, who am so feelingly alive to the "pains and penalties" of postage, must acknowledge that such letters, ten times repeated, would please me as often.

We should have been very happy to see you here, provided it occasioned no intermission in your more

serious occupations, and could have added to your amusements.

With respect to the projected 'Institute,' \* if that title be English—doubtless the times are highly favourable to patronize a work skilfully executed, whose periodical pages would be at once useful for information, and delightful for elegant composition, embellished by plates, such as have never yet been given, both for their subjects and their execution. Literature is a perpetual source opened to us; but the Fine Arts present an unploughed field, and an originality of character. The progress of the various Institutions is so much sunshine to this work. These will create an appetite, and while they provoke the curiosity, will impart a certain degree of understanding to the readers, without which a work can never be very popular. Could you secure the numerous *Smatterers* of this age, you will have an enviable body of subscribers. But the literary department of the work may be rendered of more permanent value. You are every day enlarging your correspondence with persons of real talent. Shee† is a man of genius, with a pen rather too fluent. Various passages in his prose might have been thrown out in the second edition, but an ardent Irishman is rarely known to *eat his own words*. "General" Duncan‡ may command the Oxford troops, though some of them perhaps are the "Heavy Horse." Diversified talents are useful. You ask for a definite plan. Put into action, these and many more quarters will provide a number of *good things*, and it will not be difficult to lay out the tables.

But Money, Money must not be spared in respect to rich, beautiful, and interesting Engravings. On this I have something to communicate. Encourage Dagley§ whose busts of Seneca and Scarron are pleasingly executed; but

\* This was a work at one time projected by Mr. Murray, but other more pressing literary arrangements prevented the scheme being carried into effect.

† Martin Archer Shee (afterwards President of the Royal Academy) published in 1805, 'Rhymes on Art; or, the Remonstrance of a Painter.' Lord Byron thought well of the work.

‡ Two brothers of this name, Fellows of New College, Oxford, were intimate literary friends of the Murrays and D'Israeli.

§ The engraver of the Frontispiece of 'Flim-Flams.'

you will also want artists of name. I have a friend, extremely attached to literature and the fine arts, a gentleman of opulent fortune; by what passed with him in conversation, I have reason to believe that he would be ready to assist by money to a considerable extent. Would that suit you? How would you arrange with him? Would you like to divide your work in *Shares*? He is an intimate friend of West's, and himself too an ingenious writer.

How came you to advertise 'Domestic Anecdotes?' Kearsley printed 1250 copies. I desire that no notice of the authors of that work may be known from *your* side.

I have seen nothing of the Prince [of Wales] here: Brighton has had a dull season. But a *Prince* called on me, whom I much esteem—Prince Hoare; he is Secretary for Foreign Correspondence to the Royal Academy, and lent me the third number of his 'Academic Annals,' a very useful project which the Academy has now adopted. He is to give an annual account of the state of the Arts throughout Europe. Perhaps he might contribute to your Institute.

At this moment I receive your packet of poems, and Shee's letter. I perceive that he is impressed by your attentions and your ability. It will always afford me one of my best pleasures to forward your views; I claim no merit from this, but my discernment in discovering your talents, which, under the genius of Prudence (the best of all Genii for human affairs), must inevitably reach the goal. The literary productions of I. D[Israeli] and others may not augment the profits of your trade in any considerable degree; but to get the talents of such writers at your command is a prime object, and others will follow.

I had various conversations with Phillips\* here; he is equally active, but more *wise*. He owns his *belles-lettres* books have given no great profits; in my opinion he must have lost even by some. But he makes a fortune by juvenile and useful compilations. You know I always told you he wanted *literary taste*—like an atheist, who is usually a disappointed man, he thinks all *belles lettres* are nonsense, and denies the existence of *taste*; but it exists! and I

\* Sir Richard Phillips, bookseller.

flatter myself you will profit under that divinity. I have much to say on this subject and on him when we meet.

At length I have got through your poetry : it has been a weary task ! The writer has a good deal of fire, but it is rarely a very bright flame. Here and there we see it just blaze, and then sink into mediocrity. He is too redundant and tiresome. 'Tis possible enough, if he is *young*, he may one day be a Poet ; but in truth there are few exquisite things and too much juvenility. There is nothing sufficiently defined, no pictures with finished design and bright colouring, and the greater part is a general vague commonplace. The poem on the "Boy blowing Bubbles" pleased me the best. That on "Sensibility" I do not see contains anything very novel. The whole is composed with some fancy not yet matured, with art not yet attained, and with too great a facility for rhyming. Compression, condensation, and nicety of taste are much wanted ; and on the whole I think these poems will not answer the views of a bookseller. 'Tis a great disadvantage to read them in MS., as one cannot readily turn to passages ; but life is too short to be peeping into other peoples' MSS. *I prefer your prose to your verse.* Let me know if you receive it safely, and pray give no notion to any one that I have seen the MS.

I see there is a third edition of 'The Sabbath,' in spite of the cold insolence of the *Edinburgh Review*. I observe that you are meditating an important expedition to Edinburgh. A Scotchman is a good test of his adversary's *sagacity* ; I am sure you do not want for any. Mrs. D'Israeli's best regards : she received a letter from your sister.

Believe me, as ever, yours, &c.,  
I. D'ISRAELI.

*Mr. D'Israeli to Mr. Murray.*

It is a most disagreeable office to give opinions on MSS. ; one reads them at a moment when one has other things in one's head—then one is obliged to fatigue the brain with *thinking* ; but if I can occasionally hinder you from publishing nugatory works, I do not grudge the pains. At the same time I surely need not add, how very *confidential* such communications ought to be.

When you write, make your letter as short as you choose,

for I see you are deeply occupied. The Prince's band is now arranged before my house, and I shall be overtaken by a storm of music! Mellish has been the grand dasher here; had £25,000 depending on two or three races! Had his horse Sancho not been extraordinarily successful 'tis said he meant to have shot himself. He kissed and hugged him on the grounds. At length closes his present account with a poor £5000 winner. Rode a donkey-race with Lord Petersham, who, Phaethon-like, could not manage his ass, and was dashed into a cloud of dust, rolling on the earth by (like Phaethon) carrying himself too near it. I have not done with Mellish; I hope one day to begin on him. He has thrown out a fine estate in Yorkshire, from a dice-box; anticipated his mother's jointure; drives round the Steyne all the morning, to the terror of nurses and children; bursts into the shops of milliners. This delightful boy of folly has not yet shot himself; but the time ought to be very near. He is getting old—twenty-five! he has lasted a good while, and the chink of his last guinea will soon be heard.

Your humble and affectionate nephew,

I. D'I.

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

DEAR M.,

A very particular friend of mine has sent me a pair of fine birds, one of which I mean to have dressed for supper at ten o'clock to-night. I shall be employed on the 'Curiosities' till ten, and if you will partake of this fine bird (and bottle) you have only to cast up your weekly accounts and be with me at the moment of its unspitting. Meanwhile,

Always yours,

Saturday, 5 o'clock.

I. D'I.

*Mr. D'Israeli to Mr. Murray.*

DEAR M.,

You will please to call on me to go to the theatre, as I shall take a coach going and returning. Pray let us be there at the Prologue.

The 'Honeymoon' is not the production of a person

known to you. The author was a Mr. *Tobin*, and died some time back.

I thank you much for pens, paper, &c. I have such high hopes of what I shall hereafter write, that nothing less than the wing of the poetical Swan can carry me in my flights. I have hitherto had no great luck with a goose-quill.

Your last note has so much *personal feeling* for me in one part, and so much *real wit* in the other, that I have begun to calculate the expenditure of your genius. Notes of this kind will exhaust you, I think, in the course of the winter season. What a pity you should incur such a waste!

Yours,

SEMPER IDEM.

*Mr. I. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I am delighted by your apology for not having called on me after I had taken my leave of you the day before; but you can make an unnecessary apology as agreeable as any other act of kindness.

I think you have admirably well disposed of a part of your wine, and it is done with your accustomed ingenuity, which always triples the value of a gift. Hunter should be instructed to return the same number of *empty bottles*—the only opportunity you have is to get rid of them on these occasions. They break and perish in the heap at home. *Empty bottles*, too, is an old cant term at the University to characterise a certain set of dull fellows, or frivolous scribblers—so that a bookseller, of all men, should be cautious of harbouring them.

You are sanguine in your hope of a good sale of 'Curiosities,' it will afford us a mutual gratification; but when you consider it is not a new work, though considerably improved I confess, and that those kinds of works cannot boast of so much novelty as they did about ten years ago, I am somewhat more moderate in my hopes.

What you tell me of F. F. from Symond's, is *new* to me. I sometimes throw out in the shop *remote hints* about the sale of books, all the while meaning only *mine*; but they have no skill in construing the timid wishes of a modest author; they are not aware of his suppressed sighs, nor

see the blushes of hope and fear tingling his cheek ; they are provokingly silent, and petrify the imagination.

I shall certainly not hint at your further absence from Fleet Street. And then, a great event in your life, a fortunate one as I am persuaded, must succeed—that will also produce great dissipation of mind ; but I hope that after a few months you will be fixed as the *centre point* of all your operations, and have the orb you describe moving correctly about you. To drop the metaphor, be assured your *presence is absolutely necessary* in and about your shop. You had to *emigrate* to find a solid business ; you seem to have succeeded ; you must now transplant it to your own bit of ground, and nurse it with the skill and industry of the gardener. You must employ your talents in this great *town*, as well as elsewhere, and in your *house* as well as in the *town*. You will not be offended with the ardent zeal I feel for your welfare ; I wish to see you *rooted* in the earth as well as spreading out in *blossoms* and *flowers*.

Mrs. D'Israeli desires to be particularly remembered to you, love to Jane, compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Paget, and will be very happy to be introduced to Mary Anne, whom she thanks for her polite wishes. Pray include me in all these ; I remember a beautiful Cupid's head, which just laid its chin upon your father's table, some twelve years ago. When I see Mary Anne I shall then be able to judge if I *know* her ; a metamorphosis into a *Venus* from a *Cupid* might perplex me.

Believe me, with the truest regard,

Yours ever,

I. D'ISRAELI.

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Saturday, May 31, 1806.  
King's Road.

It is my wish to see you for five minutes this day, but as you must be much engaged, and I am likely to be prevented reaching you this morning, I shall only trouble you with a line.

Most warmly I must impress on your mind the *necessity* of taking the advice of a physician. Who? You know many. We have heard extraordinary accounts of Dr. Baillie, and that (what is more extraordinary) he is not

mercenary. I should imagine that one or two visits will be sufficient to receive some definite notion of your complaint. It will be a very great point if a medical man can ascertain this. Do not suppose that it is mere rheumatism which afflicts you, and bends your whole frame. The expense of a physician is moderate, if the patient is shrewd and sensible. Five or ten pounds this way would be a good deal. You also know Dr. Blaine, even intimately.

I have written this to impress on your mind this point. Seeing you as we see you, and your friend at a fault, how to decide, and you without some relative or domestic friend about you, gives Mrs. D'I. and myself very serious concerns—for you know we do take the warmest interest in your welfare—and your talents and industry want nothing but health to make you yet, what it has always been one of my most gratifying hopes to conceive of you.

Yours very affectionately,  
I. D'ISRAELI.

In another letter from Brighton, without date, Mr. D'Israeli writes:—

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I have repeatedly felt a secret satisfaction at the spirit with which, by Clarke's communications, I heard you pursued your expedition; and have no doubt but it will repay you, in proportion to the talent and industry you have exerted, and are so capable of exerting.

I have received the three vases you have so kindly presented me. Were they of crystal, they would hardly be more precious than they now become, as your gift. I admire the feeling of taste which led you to fix on them. With *me* the *moral* feeling unites with that of *Taste*, and I contemplate at once the work of Art and the gift of Friendship.

I have various things to say; the most important is, that having waited to the last moment, the chapter of the *Edinburgh Review* has been obliged to be finished, but is still just in time for any fortunate insertion, if you have any to offer. This evening, I imagine I shall be at home.



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To-morrow evening (Sunday) I conceive I shall be in town at nine o'clock. Monday evening I am to be alone : will you take your tea then? It will be alone with me, as my wife has a child's party. Suit, however, your own convenience.

Believe me, truly yours,

I. D'ISRAELI.

The nature of Mr. Murray's important expedition to Edinburgh, mentioned in the last and in a previous letter, will be related in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

## MURRAY AND CONSTABLE—HUNTER AND THE FORFARSHIRE LAIRDS—MARRIAGE OF JOHN MURRAY.

THE most important publishing firm with which Mr. Murray was connected at the outset of his career was that of Archibald Constable & Co., of Edinburgh. This connection had a considerable influence upon Murray's future fortunes.

Constable was a man of great ability, full of spirit and enterprise. He was by nature generous, liberal, and far-seeing. The high prices which he gave for the best kind of literary work drew the best authors round him, and he raised the publishing trade of Scotland to a height that it had never before reached, and made Edinburgh a great centre of learning and literature.

His father was overseer to the Earl of Kellie, in Fife, and Archibald, after receiving a plain education at the parish school of Carnbee, was bound apprentice to Peter Hall, bookseller in Edinburgh, one of the friends and correspondents of Robert Burns. About the time of the expiration of his apprenticeship, Constable married the daughter of Mr. Wilson, printer, and began business on his own account in 1795, at the age of twenty-one. He devoted himself at first chiefly to the sale of old books connected with Scottish history and literature, by which line of trade he acquired considerable influence, and

his shop, near the Cross and the Luckenbooths, was frequented by Dalzell, Richard Heber, Alexander Murray, John Leyden, and Walter Scott.

Constable was about four years older than Murray ; both were alike full of spirit and enterprise, and eagerly looking ahead for the means of extending their connection ; Constable was perhaps more daring, but Murray was more prudent. As Isaac D'Israeli said to the latter : " Prudence is the best of all genii for human affairs."

In 1800 Constable commenced the *Farmer's Magazine*, and in the following year he acquired the property of the *Scots Magazine*, a venerable repertory of literary, historical, and antiquarian matter, on which he employed the talents of Macneil, Leyden, and Murray. But it was not until the establishment of the *Edinburgh Review*, in October, 1802, that Constable's name became a power in the publishing world.

In the year following the first issue of the *Review*, Constable took into partnership Alexander Gibson Hunter, eldest son of David Hunter, of Blackness, a large landed proprietor. The new partner brought a considerable amount of capital into the firm, at a time when capital was greatly needed in that growing concern. His duties were to take charge of the ledger and account department, though he never took much interest in his work, but preferred to call in the help of a clever arithmetical clerk.

It is unnecessary to speak of the foundation of the *Edinburgh Review*. It appeared at the right time, and was mainly supported by the talents of Jeffrey, Brougham, Sydney Smith, Francis Horner, Dr. Thomas Brown, Lord Murray, and other distinguished writers. The first number, immediately attracted public attention. Mr. Joseph Mawman was the London agent, but some dissatisfaction having

arisen with respect to his management, the London sale was transferred to the Messrs. Longman, with one half share in the property of the work.

During the partnership of Murray and Highley, they had occasional business transactions with Constable of Edinburgh. When the partnership was dissolved in March 1803, it became the duty of Murray to communicate with Constable as to the settlement of the accounts between the firms. In the following month Murray wrote to Constable requesting him to advertise ‘Dundonald on Agriculture,’ and Dagley’s book on Gems\* on the outside cover of the next *Edinburgh Review*. He also stated that he had no objection to Constable becoming the publisher of these works in Scotland. He concluded his letter with the following suggestive inquiry :

*John Murray to Mr. A. Constable.*

April 25th, 1803.

“I have several works in the press which I should be willing to consign to your management in Edinburgh, but that I presume you have already sufficient business upon your hands, and that you would not find mine worth attending to. If so, I wish that you would tell me of some vigorous young bookseller, like myself, just starting into business, upon whose probity, punctuality, and exertion you think I might rely, and I would instantly open a correspondence with him ; and in return it will give me much pleasure to do any civil office for you in London. I should be happy if any arrangement could be made wherein we might prove of reciprocal advantage ; and were you from your superabundance to pick me out any work of merit of which you would either make me the publisher in London, or in which you would allow me to become a partner, I dare say the occasion would arise wherein I

\* Mr. D’Israeli assisted in the preparation of the letterpress of this work.

could return the compliment, and you would have the satisfaction of knowing that your book was in the hands of one who has not yet so much business as to cause him to neglect any part of it."

Mr. Constable's answer was favourable. He was willing to become the agent for any works that Mr. Murray might consign to him, and he would give them his utmost attention. The result was that in June 1803 Mr. Murray sent to Constable & Co. some copies of I. D'Israeli's 'Flim-Flams,' together with a copy for the editor of the *Edinburgh*. In the following August he again wrote to Constable, congratulating him upon the extensive circulation of the *Edinburgh Review*. "I hope," he says, "it will continue its celebrity and prove highly advantageous to all its proprietors. Let me know if I can serve you in London." Murray pushed the sale of the *Review*. In November he wrote to Constable: "I have got five-and-twenty new subscribers since March," and requested that the additional numbers might be forwarded.

In October 1804 Mr. Murray, at the instance of Constable, took as his apprentice Charles Hunter, the younger brother of A. Gibson Hunter, Constable's partner. The apprenticeship was to be for four or seven years, at the option of Charles Hunter. These negotiations between the firms, and their increasing interchange of books, showed that they were gradually drawing nearer to each other, until their correspondence became quite friendly and even intimate. Walter Scott was now making his appearance as an author; Constable had published his 'Sir Tristram' in May 1804, and his 'Lay of the Last Minstrel' in January 1805. Large numbers of these works were forwarded to London and sold by Mr. Murray.

At the end of 1805, differences arose between the

Constable and Longman firms as to the periodical works in which they were interested. The Editor and proprietors of the *Edinburgh Review* were of opinion that the interest of the Longmans in two other works of a similar character—the *Annual Review* and the *Eclectic*—tended to lessen their exertions on behalf of the *Edinburgh*. It was a matter that might easily have been arranged; but the correspondents were men of hot tempers, and with pens in their hands, they sent stinging letters from London to Edinburgh, and from Edinburgh to London. Rees, Longman's partner, was as bitter in words on the one side as Hunter, Constable's partner, was on the other. At length a deadly breach took place, and it was resolved in Edinburgh that the publication of the *Edinburgh Review* should be transferred to John Murray, Fleet Street. Alexander Gibson Hunter, Constable's partner, wrote to Mr. Murray as follows:

*Mr. A. G. Hunter to John Murray.*

December 1st, 1805.

"Our game with Messieurs Longman & Co. is *entirely up!* What think you of this? You will understand, of course, that it relates to things to come, and not to things past; as there must still remain some intercourse between us (either in a direct or roundabout way) with regard to those works in which we are at present jointly concerned. But all business is at an end between us relating to future publications, to the fullest extent. It would be difficult for me to give you any account at present of this last hurricane or tornado. Suffice it to say that we have some thoughts of copying out the whole correspondence without any commentary, and submitting it confidentially to you and our mutual friend, Mr. Davies . . . Mr. Constable is to write to you to-morrow respecting our miscellaneous order of books from London, which we send for generally once a fortnight or so. I have no doubt we will experience every attention and expedition from you in procuring and

forwarding these for us. This is the beginning of what in the end will, I most fervently trust, become a most extensive and intimate connection between us, and that ere long."

Mr. Murray replied—

*John Murray to Mr. A. G. Hunter.*

December 7th, 1805.

"With regard to the important communication of your last letter, I confess the surprise with which I read it was not without some mixture of regret. The extensive connections betwixt your house and Longman's cannot be severed at once without mutual inconvenience, and perhaps mutual disadvantages, your share of which a more protracted dismemberment might have prevented. From what I had occasion to observe, I did not conceive that your concerns together would ever again move with a cordiality that would render them lasting; but still, I imagined that mutual interest and forbearance would allow them to subside into that indifference which, without animosity or mischief, would leave either party at liberty to enter upon such new arrangements as offered to their separate advantage. I do not, however, doubt but that all things have been properly considered, and perhaps finally settled for the best; but Time, the only arbitrator in these cases, must decide.

"In your proposed engagements with Mr. Davies, you will become better acquainted with a man of great natural talents, and thoroughly versed in business, which he regulates by the most honourable principles. As for myself, you will find me exceedingly assiduous in promoting your views, into which I shall enter with feelings higher than those of mere interest. Indeed, linked as our houses are at present, we have a natural tendency to mutual good understanding, which will both prevent and soften those asperities in business which might otherwise enlarge into disagreement. Country orders [referring to Constable & Co.'s 'general order'] are a branch of business which I have ever totally declined as incompatible with my more serious plans as a publisher. But *your* commissions I shall undertake with pleasure, and the punctuality with which I have attempted to execute *your first order* you will, I hope,

consider as a specimen of my disposition to give you satisfaction in every transaction in which we may hereafter be mutually engaged."

In the same letter Mr. Murray says: "I have just shipped for you nearly the whole of your order on board the *Coldstream* packet, William Ord, master."

It was a great chance for a young man entering life with a moderate amount of capital, to be virtually offered an intimate connection with one of the principal publishing houses of the day. It was one of those chances which, "taken at the flood, lead on to fortune," but there was also the question of honour, and Mr. Murray, notwithstanding his desire for opening out a splendid new connection in business, would do nothing inconsistent with the strictest honour. He was most unwilling to thrust himself in between Constable and Longman. Instead, therefore, of jumping at Constable's advantageous offer, his feelings induced him to try and promote reconciliation between the parties; and he continued to enjoin forbearance on the part of both firms, so that they might carry on their business transactions as before. The copies of the correspondence between them were submitted to the referees (Murray and Davies), and the following was Mr. Murray's reply, addressed to Messrs. Constable & Co. :—

*John Murray to Messrs. Constable & Co.*

December 14th. 1805.

GENTLEMEN,

Mr. Hunter's obliging letter to me arrived this morning. That which he enclosed with yours to his brother last night, Charles gave me to read. The contents were very flattering. Indeed, I cannot but agree with Mr. H. that his brother has displayed very honourable feelings, upon hearing of the probable separation of your house, and that of Messrs. Longman & Co. Mr. Longman was the first who



mentioned this to him, and indeed from the manner in which Charles related his conversation upon the affair, I could not but feel renewed sensations of regret at the unpleasant termination of a correspondence, which, had it been conducted upon Mr. Longman's own feelings, would have borne, I think, a very different aspect. Longman spoke of you both with kindness, and mildly complained that he had perceived a want of confidence on your part, ever since his junction with Messrs. Hurst and Orme. He confessed that the correspondence was too harsh for him to support any longer ; but, he added, '*if we must part, let us part like friends.*' I am certain, from what Charles reported to me, that Mr. L. and I think Mr. R. (Rees) are hurt by this sudden disunion.

Recollect how serious every dispute becomes upon paper, when a man writes a thousand asperities merely to show or support his superior ability. Things that would not have been spoken, or perhaps even thought of in conversation, are stated and horribly magnified *upon paper*. Consider how many disputes have arisen in the world, in which both parties were so violent in what they believed to be the support of truth, and which to the public, and indeed to themselves a few years afterwards, appeared unwise, because the occasion or cause of it was not worth contending about. Consider that you are, all of you, men who can depend upon each other's probity and honour, and where these essentials are not wanting, surely in mere matters of business the rest may be palliated by mutual bearance and forbearance. Besides, you are so connected by various publications, your common property, and some of them, such as will remain so until the termination of your lives, that you cannot effect an entire disunion, and must therefore be subject to eternal vexations and regrets which will embitter every transaction and settlement between you.

You know, moreover, that it is one of the misfortunes of our nature, that disputes are always the most bitter in proportion to former intimacy. And how much dissatisfaction will it occasion if either of you are desirous in a year or two of renewing that intimacy which you are now so anxious to dissolve—to say nothing of your relative utility to each other—a circumstance which is never properly estimated, except when the want of the means reminds us

of what we have been at such pains to deprive ourselves. Pause, my dear sirs, whilst to choose be yet in your power ; show yourselves superior to common prejudice, and by an immediate exercise of your acknowledged pre-eminence of intellect, suffer arrangements to be made for an accommodation and for a renewal of that connexion which has heretofore been productive of honour and profit. I am sure I have to apologize for having ventured to say so much to men so much my superiors in sense and knowledge of the world and their own interest ; but sometimes the meanest bystander may perceive disadvantages in the movements of the most skilful players.

You will not, I am sure, attribute anything which I have said to an insensibility to the immediate advantages which will arise to myself from a determination opposite to that which I have taken the liberty of suggesting. It arises from a very different feeling. I should be very little worthy of your great confidence and attention to my interest upon this occasion, if I did not state freely the result of my humble consideration of this matter ; and having done so, I do assure you that if the arrangements which you now propose are carried into effect, I will apply the most arduous attention to your interest, to which I will turn the channel of my own thoughts and business, which, I am proud to say, is rising in proportion to the industry and honourable principles which have been used in its establishment. I am every day adding to a most respectable circle of literary connexions, and I hope, a few months after the settlement of your present affairs, to offer shares to you of works in which you will feel it advantageous to engage. Besides, as I have at present no particular bias, no enormous works of my own which would need all my care, I am better qualified to attend to any that you may commit to my charge ; and, being young, my business may be formed with a disposition, as it were, towards yours ; and thus growing up with it, we are more likely to form a durable connexion than can be expected with persons whose views are imperceptibly but incessantly diverging from each other.

Should you be determined—*irrevocably* determined (but consider !) upon the disunion with Messrs. Longman, I will just observe that when persons have been intimate, they have discovered each other's vulnerable points ; it

therefore shows no great talent to direct at them shafts of resentment. It is easy both to write and to say ill-natured, harsh, and cutting things of each other. But remember that this power is *mutual*, and in proportion to the poignancy of the wound which you would inflict will be your own feelings when it is returned. It is therefore a maxim which I laid down soon after a separation which I *had*, never to say or do to my late colleague what he could say or do against me in return. I knew that I had the personal superiority, but what his own ingenuity could not suggest, others could write for him.

I must apologize again for having been so tedious, but I am sure that the same friendliness on your part which has produced these hasty but well-meant expostulations will excuse them. After this, I trust it is unnecessary for me to state with how much sincerity,

I am, dear sirs,

Your faithful friend,

JOHN MURRAY.

Ten days after this letter was written, Mr. Murray sent a copy of it to Messrs. Longman & Co., and wrote :—

*John Murray to Messrs. Longman & Co.*

December 24th, 1805.

GENTLEMEN,

The enclosed letter will show that I am not ignorant that a misunderstanding prevails betwixt your house and that of Messrs. Constable & Co. With the cause, however, I am as yet unacquainted ; though I have attempted, but in vain, to obviate a disunion which I most sincerely regret. Whatever arrangements with regard to myself may take place in consequence will have arisen from circumstances which it was not in my power to prevent ; and they will not therefore be suffered to interfere in any way with those friendly dispositions which will continue, I trust, to obtain between you and, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. MURRAY.

But the split was not to be avoided. It appears, however, that by the contract entered into by Constable with

Longmans in 1803, the latter had acquired a legal right precluding the publication of the *Edinburgh Review* by another publisher without their express assent. Such assent not having been given, the London publication of the *Edinburgh* continued in Longman's hands for a time : but all the other works of Constable were at once transferred to Mr. Murray. The latter, in his communication to Constable (January 4, 1806), wrote :—

“Messrs. Longman have sent to me the remainder of such books of yours as they had on hand, and they will occupy, as you prognosticated, a good space in my warehouse. We are just now arranging and counting them ; and in a day or two I shall be able to send you a list.”

In April 1806 Mr. Murray joined Constable & Co. in taking shares of the *Gazetteer of Scotland*, Sir John Sinclair's ‘Code of Health and Longevity,’ and Stark's ‘Picture of Edinburgh.’

In the course of April Constable wrote to Murray in great spirits :—

“Our Edinburgh books are going off so well with your able assistance and activity that we shall be obliged to establish at least ten additional printing-houses, and as many binding shops, to enable us to supply the demand.”

Mr. Constable invited Murray to come to Edinburgh to renew their personal friendship and cement their confidential intercourse. Mr. Murray had in the previous year paid a visit to Edinburgh on “an important expedition,” as referred to by Mr. I. D'Israeli in the preceding chapter. He had then visited Constable and made his acquaintance ; and now that their union was likely to be much closer, he desired to repeat the visit, but Mr. Murray had another, and, so far as regarded his personal happiness, a much more important cause of his renewed visit to Edinburgh.

This was the affection which he had begun to entertain for Miss Elliot, daughter of the late Charles Elliot, publisher, with whom Mr. Murray's father had been in such constant correspondence. The affection was mutual, and it seemed probable that the attachment would ripen into a marriage.

Mr. Constable's invitation could not be accepted during the busy period of the publishing season. A promise was, however, given that towards the end of the year he might expect to see Mr. Murray once more in Edinburgh. Meantime Murray was deeply absorbed by his publishing business; '*Bell's Surgery*,' once in continuous demand, was now out of date; it was superseded by Samuel Cooper's '*Dictionary of Practical Surgery*,' published by Mr. Murray. Among the other medical works which he brought out were '*Thomson's Dispensatory*,' and a work on the Medical Department of Armies, but from this time he gradually gave up the publication of medical and surgical works, and devoted himself to other branches of literature, which opened up a newer and wider field.

A circumstance, not without influence on Murray's future, occurred about this time with respect to the '*Miniature*,' a volume of comparatively small importance, consisting of essays written by boys at Eton, and originally published at Windsor by Charles Knight. Through Dr. Rennell, Master of the Temple, his friend and neighbour, who lived close at hand, Murray became acquainted with the younger Rennell, Mr. Stratford Canning, Gally Knight, the two sons of the Marquis Wellesley, John and Robert Smith, and other young Etonians, who had originated and conducted this School magazine. Thirty-four numbers appeared in the course of a year, and were then brought out in a volume by Mr. Knight at the expense of the

authors. The transaction had involved them in debt. "Whatever chance of success our hopes may dictate," wrote Stratford Canning, "yet our apprehensions teach us to tremble at the possibility of additional expenses," and the sheets lay unsold on the bookseller's hands. Mr. Murray, who was consulted about the matter, said to Dr. Rennell, "Tell them to send the unsold sheets to me, and I will pay the debt due to the printer." The whole of the unsold sheets were sent by the "Windsor Waggon" to Mr. Murray's at Fleet Street. He made waste-paper of the whole bundle—there were 6376 numbers in all,—brought out a new edition of 750 copies, printed in good type, and neatly bound, and announced to Stratford Canning that he did this at his own cost and risk, and would make over to the above Etonians half the profits of the work. The young authors were highly pleased by this arrangement, and Stratford Canning wrote to Murray (October 20, 1805): "We cannot sufficiently thank you for your kind attention to our concerns, and only hope that the success of the *embryo* edition may be equal to your care." How great was the importance of the venture in his eyes may be judged from the naïve allusion with which he proceeds: "It will be a week or two before we commit it to the press, for amidst our other occupations the business of the school must not be neglected, and that by itself is no trivial employment."

By means of this transaction Murray had the sagacity to anticipate an opportunity of making friends of Canning, Frere, and the Smiths, who were never tired of eulogizing the spirit and enterprise of the young Fleet Street publisher. Stratford Canning introduced him to his cousin George, the great minister, whose friendship and support had a very considerable influence in promoting and establishing his

future prosperity. It is scarcely necessary to add that the new edition of the 'Miniature' speedily became waste paper.

Among his other publications may be mentioned Krusenstern's 'Voyage round the World,' new editions of 'The Picture of London,' 'Fielding's Novels,' and 'Marmontel's Tales'; the latter illustrated by Bird of Bristol. On bringing out Richard Duppa's 'Life of Michael Angelo,' a copy of the book was sent, at the author's request, to Robert Southey, the poet, then living at Greta Hall. Mr. Southey, when acknowledging the receipt of the book, wrote to Mr. Duppa—

"It was accompanied by a note from Mr. Murray of a complimentary kind. I like to be complimented in my authorial character, and best of all by booksellers, because their good opinion gets purchasers, and so praise leads to pudding, which I consider to be the solid end of praise."

Mr. Southey was not then aware how closely he and Mr. Murray were afterwards to become related, and how much "pudding" he was to derive from the connection.

Now that his reputation as a publisher was becoming established, Mr. Murray grew more particular as to the guise of the books which he issued. He employed the best makers of paper, the best printers, and the best bookbinders. He attended to the size and tone of the paper, the quality of the type, the accuracy of the printing, and the excellence of the illustrations. All this involved a great deal of correspondence. We find his letters to the heads of departments full of details as to the turn-out of his books. Everything, from the beginning to the end of the issue of a work—the first inspection of the MS., the consultation with confidential friends as to its fitness for publication, the form in which it was to appear, the correction of the proofs, the binding, title, and final advertisement—engaged his closest attention. Besides the elegant

appearance of his books, he also aimed at raising the standard of the literature which he published. He had to criticize as well as to select ; to make suggestions as to improvements where the manuscript was regarded with favour, and finally to launch the book at the right time and under the best possible auspices. It might almost be said of the publisher, as it is of the poet, that he is born, not made. And Mr. Murray appears, from the beginning to the end of his career, to have been a born publisher.

In August, 1806, during the slack season in London, Mr. Murray made his promised visit to Edinburgh. He had two objects in view ; first, to accept the cordial invitation of Constable, and make his further personal acquaintance ; but his principal object was to cultivate the friendship of Mrs. Elliot, and to prosecute his suit with her daughter. It is unnecessary to enter into particulars ; but nothing seems to have occurred to throw any obstacle in the way of a happy result.

Mr. Murray was warmly received by Constable and Hunter, and enjoyed their hospitality for some days. After business matters had been disposed of, he was taken in hand by Hunter, the junior partner, and led off by him to enjoy the perilous hospitality of the Forfarshire lairds.

Those have been called the days of heroic drinking. Intemperance prevailed to an enormous extent. Mr. Robert Chambers, in his 'Memoir of Burns,' says that he came to Edinburgh at an unfortunate time—a time of greater licentiousness, perhaps, in all the capitals of Europe, and this northern one among the rest, than had been known for a long period. Men of the best education and social position drank like the Scandinavian barbarians of olden times. Tavern-drinking, now almost unknown



among the educated and professional classes of Edinburgh, was then carried by all ranks to a dreadful excess.

Murray was conducted by Hunter to his father's house of Eskmount in Forfarshire, where he was most cordially received, and in accordance with the custom of the times the hospitality included invitations to drinking bouts at the neighbouring houses.

An unenviable notoriety in this respect attached to Brechin Castle, the residence of Fox Maule of Panmure, commonly known as the "Generous Sportsman." He was the second son of the eighth Earl of Dalhousie, but on succeeding to his mother's estate had assumed the name of Maule in lieu of that of Ramsay.

Much against his will, Murray was compelled to take part in some of these riotous festivities with the rollicking, hard-drinking Forfarshire lairds, and doubtless he was not sorry to make his escape at length uninjured, if not unscathed, and to return to more congenial society in Edinburgh. His attachment to Miss Elliot ended in an engagement. The question arose, when was the marriage to take place? In the meantime, Mr. Adam Bruce, the family solicitor, with a cautious eye to the future, was endeavouring to obtain some information from London as to the suitor's character. He wrote to the young lady's brother William, then residing in London :

*Mr. Adam Bruce to Mr. Wm. Elliot.*

Oct. 27, 1806.

"I have heard of what is going on in Charlotte Street ; but from my having no acquaintances in London, I have no opportunity of making inquiries. I saw the gentleman while in Edinburgh and think well of him. I hope any accounts you have of him are satisfactory. Your uncle is something in the same situation as I am, having few acquaintances in London to whom he can apply on so delicate a subject."

The result of the inquiries could not fail to be satisfactory. Mr. Murray was engaged in conducting a prosperous business; his name was becoming famous amongst booksellers and publishers as that of a man who could be relied on, and the public had confidence in the tone and quality of the works which he published.

In the course of his correspondence with Miss Elliot's trustees, Mr. Murray gave a statement of his actual financial position at the time:

"When I say," he wrote, "that my capital in business amounts to five thousand pounds, I meant it to be understood that if I quitted business to-morrow, the whole of my property being sold, even disadvantageously, it would leave a balance in my favour, free from debt or any incumbrance, of the sum above specified. But you will observe that, continuing it as I shall do in business, I know it to be far more considerable and productive. I will hope that it has not been thought uncandid in me if I did not earlier specify the amount of my circumstances, for I considered that I had done this in the most delicate and satisfactory way when I took the liberty of referring you to Mr. Constable to whom I consequently disclosed my affairs, and whose knowledge of my connexions in business might I thought have operated more pleasingly to Miss Elliot's friends than any communication from myself."

The correspondence with Miss Elliot went on, and at length it was arranged that Mr. Murray should proceed to Edinburgh for the marriage. He went by mail in the month of February. A tremendous snowstorm set in on his journey north. From a village near Doncaster he wrote to Constable: "the horses were twice blown quite round, unable to face the horrid blast of cold wind, the like of which I have never known before. There was at the same time a terrible fall of snow, which completely obscured everything that could be seen from the coach window. The snow became of great depth, and six strong

horses could scarcely pull us through. We are four hours behind time." From Doncaster he went to Durham in a postchaise; and pushing onward, he at last reached Edinburgh after six days' stormy travelling.

While at Edinburgh, Mr. Murray resided with Mr. Sands, one of the late Charles Elliot's trustees. The marriage took place on the 6th March, 1807, and the newly-married pair at once started for Kelso, in spite of the roads being still very bad, and obstructed by snow. Near Blackshields the horses fell down and rolled over and over. The post-boy's leg was broken, and the carriage was sadly damaged. A neighbouring blacksmith was called to the rescue, and after an hour and a half, the carriage was sufficiently repaired to be able to proceed. A fresh pair of horses was obtained at the next stage, and the married couple reached Kelso in safety. They remained there a few days, waiting for Mrs. Elliot, who was to follow them; and on her arrival, they set out at once for the south.

The intimacy which existed between Mr. Murray and Mr. D'Israeli will be observed from the fact of the latter being selected as one of the marriage trustees. A few days after the arrival of the married pair in London, they were invited to dine with Mr. D'Israeli and his friends. Mr. Alexander Hunter, whom Mr. Murray had invited to stay with him during his visit to London, thus describes the event:—

"Dressed, and went along with the Clan Murray to dine at Mr. D'Israeli's, where we had a most sumptuous banquet, and a very large party, in honour of the newly-married folks. There was a very beautiful woman there, Mrs. Turner, wife of Sharon Turner, the Anglo-Saxon historian, who, I am told, was one of the Godwin school! If they be all as beautiful, accomplished, and agreeable as this lady, they must be a deuced dangerous set indeed, and I should not choose to trust myself amongst them.

“ Our male part of the company consisted mostly of literary men—Cumberland, Turner, D’Israeli, Basevi, Prince Hoare, and Cervetto, the truly celebrated violoncello player. Turner was the most able and agreeable of the whole by far ; Cumberland, the most talkative and eccentric perhaps, has a good sprinkling of learning and humour in his conversation and anecdote, from having lived so long amongst the eminent men of his day, such as Johnson, Foote, Garrick, and such like. But his conversation is sadly disgusting, from his tone of irony and detraction conveyed in a cunning sort of way and directed constantly against the *Edinburgh Review*, Walter Scott (who is a ‘poor ignorant boy, and no poet,’ and never wrote a five-foot line in his life), and such other d——d stuff.”

## CHAPTER IV.

‘MARMION’—‘DOMESTIC COOKERY’—THE ‘EDINBURGH  
REVIEW.’

MR. MURRAY was twenty-nine years old at the time of his marriage. He was in the prime of life and full of hope for the future. Good fortune had heretofore accompanied him, and benefiting by his past experience, he was ready to undertake any enterprise justified by prudence and forethought. Constable wrote to Hunter: “I had the pleasure of a few lines from Murray two days ago; he is a most fortunate fellow, and very deserving of it all.”

That Mr. Murray was full of contentment as well as hope at this time may be inferred from his letter to Constable three weeks after his marriage:—

*John Murray to Mr. Constable.*

March 27th, 1807.

“I declare to you that I am every day more content with my lot. Neither my wife nor I have any disposition for company or going out; and you may rest assured that I shall devote all my attention to business, and that your concerns will not be less the object of my regard merely because you have raised mine so high. Every moment, my dear Constable, I feel more grateful to you, and I trust that you will ever find me your faithful friend,—J. M.”

Some of the most important events in Murray’s career

occurred during the first year of his married life. Chief among them may perhaps be mentioned the publication of 'Marmion' (in Feb. 1808)—which brought him into intimate connection with Walter Scott—and his appointment for a time as publisher in London of the *Edinburgh Review*; for he was thus brought into direct personal contact with those forces which ultimately led to the chief literary enterprise of his life—the publication of the *Quarterly Review*.

Scott's 'Lay of the Last Minstrel' had been so successful that Constable offered him one thousand pounds for the poem of 'Marmion' very shortly after it was begun, and before he had seen a line of the manuscript. This bold and generous offer startled the literary world. "It was a price," Scott afterwards said, "that made men's hair stand on end." Constable offered one-fourth of the copyright to Mr. Miller of Albemarle Street, and one-fourth to Mr. Murray of Fleet Street. Both publishers eagerly accepted the proposal. Murray wrote to Constable :

"I am truly sensible of the kind remembrance of me in your liberal purchase. You have rendered Mr. Miller no less happy by your admission of him ; and we both view it as honourable, profitable, and glorious, to be concerned in the publication of a new poem by Walter Scott."

Mr. Scott called upon Mr. Murray in London shortly after the return of the latter from his marriage in Edinburgh.

*John Murray to Mr. Constable.*

March 27th, 1807.

"Mr. Scott called upon me on Tuesday, and we conversed for an hour. . . . He appears very anxious that 'Marmion' should be published by the King's birthday. . . . He said he wished it to be ready by that time for very particular

reasons; and yet he allows that the poem is not completed, and that he is yet undetermined if he shall make his hero happy or otherwise."

The poem was not, however, published until the beginning of the following year, when it appeared in a splendid quarto edition at a guinea and a-half. Before the arrival of the volumes from Edinburgh, Murray had sold 1500 copies at his trade sale. The first edition was out of print in less than a month, and a second edition of 3000 was ordered to be printed, of which Murray at once subscribed for 1500 copies. The book went on from edition to edition, and proved to be one of the greatest publishing successes of the day.

Mr. Scott edited and published, through Mr. Murray, Strutt's unfinished romance of 'Queenhoo Hall' and the 'Sadler Papers.'

The other important event, to which allusion has been made, was the transfer to Mr. Murray of part of the London agency for the *Edinburgh Review*. At the beginning of 1806 Murray sold 1000 copies of the *Review* on the day of its publication, and the circulation was steadily increasing. Constable proposed to transfer the entire London publication to Murray, but the Longmans protested, under the terms of their existing agreement. In April 1807 they employed as their attorney Mr. Sharon Turner, a cousin of Mr. D'Israeli, and one of Murray's staunchest allies. Turner informed him, through a common friend, of his having been retained by the Longmans; but Murray said he could not in any way "feel hurt at so proper and indispensable a pursuit of his profession." The opinion of counsel was in favour of the Messrs. Longman's contention, and of their "indisputable rights to one-half of the *Edin-*

*burgh Review* so long as it continues to be published under that title.'

Longman & Co. accordingly obtained an injunction to prevent the publication of the *Edinburgh Review* by any other publisher in London without their express consent. Jeffrey, the editor, took part in the controversy. He suggested that he should send in his resignation, and that Constable & Co. should start a *New Edinburgh Review*. These arrangements, if carried into effect, might have caused many difficulties, and perhaps led to the ruin of both the publications. Murray wrote to Constable :

*John Murray to Messrs. Constable & Co.*

May 30th, 1807.

"The official serving of the injunction upon me will probably occur to-day. It will extend in some measure to every vendor of the *Review*—that is to say, any one selling it is liable to action should the adverse party think proper to go that length ; but as it is not their interest to go that length, it is to be presumed that they may not, yet it must be guarded against. Your answer to the injunction, which will bring the matter to issue, is the only certain remedy. We have hitherto been successful in obviating any ill effects of the measures against us, and the grand sale of the *Review* has been suffered to take place without interruption."

"It must certainly," says Murray in a subsequent letter, "have been a very pleasing thing to you to have found such a sympathetic satisfaction in Longman, to offer pipes of wine to the editor and projector of the *Edinburgh Review*, but nothing that I could find has been said or thought of the original and spirited publishers of the same periodical. I am therefore most happy, if I be the first, to show my humble opinion of the merit due to them in offering from myself a pipe of the best port wine that I could procure. I beg you to accept it as a mere memorandum of the real services which I shall at all times be happy to render you for your great friendship to me, as well as of



the very high esteem which I entertain for the characters of Messrs. Constable and Hunter."

The difference between the contending publishers was brought to a crisis by Mr. Jeffrey in the following letter to Messrs. Constable and Co.

*Mr. Francis Jeffrey to Messrs. Constable & Co.*

June 1st, 1807.

GENTLEMEN,

I believe you understand already that neither I nor any of the original and regular writers in the *Review* will ever contribute a syllable to a work belonging to booksellers. It is proper, however, to announce this to you distinctly, that you may have no fear of hardship or disappointment in the event of Mr. Longman succeeding in his claim to the property of this work. If that claim be not speedily rejected or abandoned, it is our fixed resolution to withdraw entirely from the *Edinburgh Review*; to publish to all the world that the conductor and writers of the former numbers have no sort of connection with those that may afterwards appear; and probably to give notice of our intention to establish a new work of a similar nature under a different title.

I have the honour to be, gentlemen,

Your very obedient servant,

F. JEFFREY.

A copy of this letter was at once forwarded to Messrs. Longman. Constable, in his communication accompanying it, assured the publishers that, in the event of the editor and contributors to the *Edinburgh Review* withdrawing from the publication, and establishing a new periodical, the existing *Review* would soon be of no value either to proprietors or publishers, and requested to be informed whether they would not be disposed to transfer their interest in the property, and, if so, on what considerations. Constable added: "We are apprehensive that the editors will not postpone for many days longer that public notification

of their secession, which we cannot help anticipating as the death-blow of the publication."

Jeffrey's decision seems to have settled the matter. Messrs. Longman agreed to accept £1000 for their claim of property in the title and future publication of the *Edinburgh Review*. The injunction was removed, and the London publication of the *Review* was forthwith transferred to John Murray, 32 Fleet Street, under whose auspices No. 22 accordingly appeared.

The circulation continued to increase. The number sold in London went from 1000 in 1806 to 3500 at the beginning of 1807; and after the transfer of the publication to Mr. Murray, it still further increased. Of the 7000 copies printed in Edinburgh, about 5000 were sent to the London publisher.

In connection with Constable, Murray also published a considerable number of other new works and reprints, amongst them the 'Mountain Bard' and the 'Shepherd's Guide' of Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd; while he also took part in the publication of the re-edited dramas of Ford, Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher. He was invited to purchase the 'Philosophical Magazine.' Constable recommended for its editor Professor Wallace of Edinburgh. He wrote to Murray, "you will find him a block of gold, with rather a whinstone appearance."

Thus far all had gone on smoothly. But a little cloud, at first no bigger than a man's hand, made its appearance, and it grew and grew until it threw a dark shadow over the friendship of Constable and Murray, and eventually led to their complete separation. This was the system of persistent drawing of accommodation bills, renewals of bills, and promissory notes. Constable began to draw heavily upon Murray in April 1807, and the promissory notes went on

accumulating until they constituted a mighty mass of paper money. Bills were renewed, again and again, and the bankers were put off as long as possible. Murray's banker cautioned him against the practice, which was desperately costly, and certain in the long run to prove ruinous. "An ounce of comfort," he said, "is worth a pound of care." But repeated expostulation was of no use against the impetuous needs of Constable & Co. Only two months after the transfer of the publication of the *Review* to Mr. Murray, we find him writing to "Dear Constable" as follows :—

*John Murray to Mr. Archd. Constable.*

Oct. 1st, 1807.

"I should not have allowed myself time to write to you to-day, were not the occasion very urgent. Your people have so often of late omitted to give you timely notice of the day when my acceptances fell due, that I have suffered an inconvenience too great for me to have expressed to you, had it not occurred so often that it is impossible for me to undergo the anxiety which it occasions. A bill of yours for £200 was due yesterday, and I have been obliged to supply the means for paying it, without any notice for preparation; and on Wednesday, the first of your bills to Longman for £333. 6s. 8d. is due, and I am to remain until that day under apprehensions, lest it should be forgotten to be remitted, as it is not stated in your cash account. In granting my acceptances to your bills, I mean to exemplify all the faithful confidence which I repose in your friendship; but if the line of punctuality is once broken in upon, how can I remain easy? The best bills in the world I cannot get discounted at a moment's notice. . . . I declare to you that it is imperative for me to tell you all the anxieties and inconvenience which I have undergone; but your own feelings will conceive them when you find it has obliged me to write to you on the subject. What would be the consequence, if anything led me from town without providing for your bills? I beg of you to insist upon this being regulated, as I am sure you must desire it to be, so that I may receive the cash for your bills two days at least before they are due."

Mr. Murray then gives a list of bills of his own (including some of Constable's) amounting to £1073, which he has to pay in the following week. From a cash account made out by Mr. Murray on the 3rd of October, it appears that the bill transactions with Constable had become enormous; they amounted to not less than £10,000. Murray asks for bills to keep himself right with Messrs. Dixon, his banker. "You will see," he concludes, "what an immense sum I am to provide for, and what a difference your own bills would make to me." More communications of the same kind followed. Constable sent Murray bills at forty days; but the latter said, "these are of no use to me at present; and I am therefore obliged to solicit the favour of you to get me a remittance at sight." £2000 of Mrs. Murray's marriage portion had been paid to Mr. Constable, of which he only remitted one half; and there was much correspondence about the remainder. Both continued very hard pressed for money.

*John Murray to Mr. Archd. Constable.*

March 12th, 1808.

"I will not, I cannot, doubt the sincerity of your friendship for me, after so much mutual intimacy; and yet your conduct towards me lately is so very different from what I felt myself accustomed to receive, that I neither know how to act, nor how to think, upon the serious affairs which are pending between us. Twelve months ago I confided to your honour and friendship the receipt of two bonds of a thousand pounds each [part of his wife's marriage portion] with the interest upon them. The first of them that was paid you remitted to me immediately; the second, being long overdue, I repeatedly urged you to obtain, assuring you as often that I very much wanted the money. Notwithstanding which, you never wrote to me as you did in the former case; but in consequence of a new request from me, you at length told me that it had been paid, and, as if you did not know that I had expressly informed you that I wanted the money, you asked me how it should be remitted? My answer was, soliciting the favour of you to remit the

sum in bills, as you did the amount of my former bond. In consequence of this, I have been expecting the money every day, until the receipt of your last letter, a month after the money had been paid to you, whereas, without any notice of the time that it had been already detained, you tell me that it will be convenient for you to retain it for a month, unless I wish you to remit it to me. This behaviour, Mr. Constable, after a week's consideration, does not appear to me to be reconcilable either with friendship or business. . . . In consequence of not receiving the amount of the bond and interest, as I expected, I was obliged to sell stock to make up a large sum that I wanted, and this day I am unexpectedly obliged to provide £250 in consequence of your failure to remit this sum, for a bill of yours now due, and inserted in your cash account amongst those to be remitted to me ; and I have also the inconvenience of adding a similar sum, under the apprehension that you may again fail in sending me a second £250 of yours, due on Monday next."

It soon became evident that this state of things could not be allowed to continue. Reconciliations took place from time to time, but interruptions again occurred, mostly arising from the same source—a perpetual flood of bills and promissory notes, from one side and the other—until Murray found it peremptorily necessary to put an end to it. Towards the end of 1808 Messrs. Constable established at No. 10 Ludgate Street a London house for the sale of the *Edinburgh Review*, and the other works in which they were concerned, under the title of Constable, Hunter, Park and Hunter. This, doubtless, tended to widen the breach between Constable and Murray, though it left the latter free to enter into arrangements for establishing a Review of his own, an object which he had already contemplated.

There were many books in which the two houses had a joint interest, and, therefore, their relations could not be altogether discontinued. 'Marmion' was coming out in successive editions ; but the correspondence between the

publishers grew cooler and cooler. Failures were occurring in Edinburgh. Money in the city was at 9 per cent. In these circumstances, letters such as the following could not have been very satisfactory to the London publisher.

*Messrs. Constable & Co. to John Murray.*

December 8th, 1810.

"It is the most unpleasant thing to be obliged to delay sending you a remittance so completely promised; but as the want of it till Monday will not, I trust, put you to inconvenience at all amounting to the vexation I feel at this moment from a dependence on the promises of others—to put it out of my power to send you the cash as I most firmly expected. Do me the kindness to forgive this till you hear from me."

This was followed up thirteen days later by the following letter from Constable to Murray:—

"I have been again under the necessity of drawing upon you for £350 at two months, which I of course trust to your friendship to accept."

The correspondence went on some time longer, until at length it came to a sudden termination, as will be hereafter related.

Mr. Murray had also considerable bill transactions with Ballantyne & Co. of Edinburgh. James and John Ballantyne had been schoolfellows of Walter Scott at Kelso, and the acquaintance there formed was afterwards renewed. James Ballantyne established the *Kelso Mail* in 1796, but at the recommendation of Scott, for whom he had printed a collection of ballads, he removed to Edinburgh in 1802. There he printed the 'Border Minstrelsy,' for Scott, who assisted him with money. Ballantyne was in frequent and intimate correspondence with Murray from the year 1806, and had printed for him Hogg's 'Ettrick Shepherd,' and

other works. Moreover, they contemplated jointly the issue of a series of translations of the principal Classics, a scheme in which, writes James Ballantyne, "I expect much useful aid from Mr. Scott in selecting and arranging the proper classics. He seems to be much pleased with the plan."

'Pliny's Letters,' always a great favourite of Mr. Murray, was to have been the pioneer of the series, but the scheme was never carried out. The activity of Scott, however, provided the printer's chief supply of copy; the publication of his works, 'Sir Tristram' and the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' followed in due time; and a gigantic scheme then presented itself to Scott, no less than a complete edition of the 'British Poets,' ancient and modern.

Scott now committed the great error of his life. His income was about £1000 a year, and with the profits of his works he might have built Abbotsford and lived in comfort and luxury. But in 1805 he sacrificed everything by entering into partnership with James Ballantyne, and embarking in his printing concern almost the whole of the capital which he possessed. He was bound to the firm for twenty years, and during that time he produced his greatest works. It is true that but for the difficulties in which he was latterly immersed, we might never have known the noble courage with which he encountered his trials and endeavoured to rise above his fate.

The scheme of the 'British Poets' fell through. It was afterwards taken up in a limited form by Mr. Thomas Campbell in his 'Specimens of English Poetry.' Meanwhile Scott proceeded with the 'Life and Works of Dryden;' wrote articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, and lived the life of a hard-working literary man. Ballantyne was enlarging his premises in the Canongate. "We had

a grand shine yesterday," wrote Alexander Hunter (Constable's partner) to John Murray, 14th July, 1807 ; " at Messrs. Ballantyne's printing office in his new rooms there, and a very nice thing it was. There were sixteen of us present ; Walter Scott, William Erskine, Parson Thomson [Thomson of Duddingstone, the painter], Creech, and others. Everything good and abundant. White Hermitage the order of the day. What would your London printers say to this ? " In the following year James Ballantyne took his brother John into partnership ; and the concern seemed to go on very prosperously with Scott as Commander-in-chief.

In 1808 a scheme of great magnitude was under contemplation by Murray and the Ballantynes. It was a uniform edition of the 'British Novelists,' beginning with De Foe, and ending with the novelists at the close of last century ; with biographical prefaces and illustrative notes by Walter Scott. A list of the novels, written in the hand of John Murray, includes thirty-six British, besides eighteen foreign authors. The collection could not have been completed in less than two hundred volumes. The scheme, if it did not originate with Walter Scott, had at least his cordial support, as will be seen from his letters to Mr. Murray, now for the first time made public.

*Mr. Walter Scott to John Murray.\**

Ashestiel. Oct. 30th, 1808.

I have also been turning over in my mind the plan of the Novels and Romances. In my opinion they should be set about without loss of time, beginning with the Novels. Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett will lead the van with a very short memoir of each of those lives, and a prefatory essay on the peculiarities of their style. These will be followed by a good selection of novels of less name.

\* The first part of this letter, which refers to the *Quarterly Review*, is printed in the next chapter.



Those of later date may, however, be property, but I presume that the proprietors, for example of Miss Burney's novels or Mrs. Ratcliffe's, may be easily induced to consent to their insertion. I want very much an old catalogue of a large circulating library (suppose Hookham's or Lane's) to assist my memory in pointing out the works which should be inserted. I have the utmost confidence in this plan succeeding to an extent almost immense, and will gladly make you a present of my own time and labour should the work not prove profitable. Despatch is, however, the surest forerunner of success. I am endeavouring to get Richardson's Novels—pray send me his Letters lately published. As the criticism will be of a different text and paging, the Novels in double columns may, I think, be comprised in two or almost three volumes, being either ten or seven 8vo. volumes to one of the new edition.

Pray do not omit to pick up old romances and novels and tales, and above all keep your plan secret. If you send me any packages before the 12th of next month, direct them to Ballantyne's care. On that day I must be in Edinburgh, as our Courts sit down. The time of my London journey is still uncertain, but must take place before Christmas.

I showed Mr. Robt. Dundas (President of the Board of Control) our plan of a Review,\* and told him I should call on him for a good account of Indian affairs as opportunity shall offer. He approves highly, as does Mr. Canning.

I am, dear sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

*Mr. Walter Scott to John Murray.*

Ashestiel, Nov. 2nd, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR,

I wrote you a few days ago, since which I was favoured with your letter of the 26th, containing the lists of the Novels, &c., which were very acceptable. I agree with you that the shape of the Drama is inconvenient, but I really fear there is no other in which our matter will endure the necessary compression. This size is also most convenient for a shooting-seat or other place of temporary residence, as it contains a great deal in little space, and is very easily transported.

\* The *Quarterly*.

It has also the convenience of not being "*borrowed*" with facility, and although the book be heavy, the subject is light—were it a volume of Sermons, indeed, a fair lady might endanger her toes by falling asleep with it in her hand. To give the selection some appearance of arrangement, it will be necessary to separate the Translations from the original Novels, to place those of each author together—which I observe is neglected in Harrison's series—and to keep the Novels, properly so-called, separate from Romances and Tales. I have little doubt that 20 volumes of 700 pages will hold all the Novels, &c., that are worth reprinting, but I will be a much better judge when I see the catalogues. Should we find on strict selection that a volume or two more will be necessary, we can throw the Tales into a separate division. As I am quite uncertain about my journey to town, I think you had better send me the catalogues by the mail coach. The name of work should be fixed. I have thought of two, which I submit to you: 'The Cabinet of Novels, being a collection, &c.,' or 'The English Novelist.' I like the first best because it might be varied into 'The Cabinet of Tales and Romances;' but perhaps you can hit upon some one better than either. We must have as many of Charlotte Smith's novels as we can compass—the 'Old Manor House' in particular. Pray look out for 'Chaou Kiou Choau; or, The Pleasing Chinese History'; it is a work of equal rarity and curiosity. I agree entirely with you about Baron Trenck; but as to Marmontel, don't you think a good selection of memoirs might one day be a more fit receptacle for him than our Cabinet?

Your faithful servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

Mr. Murray not unreasonably feared the cost of carrying such an undertaking to completion. It could not have amounted to less than twenty thousand pounds. Yet the Ballantynes urged him on. They furnished statements of the cost of printing and paper for each volume. "It really strikes me," said James Ballantyne, "the more I think of and examine it, to be the happiest speculation that has ever been thought of."

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

"With regard to the strong case which you put, of your being £19,000 in advance before you could draw any part of your outlay, Mr. Scott is of opinion that you might publish a part of the work during its progress; so much, that is, as would of itself form a respectable publication, and would at the same time prove you to be so far advanced as to distance competition. He thinks you may safely publish the works of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, before proceeding further . . . Mr. Scott thinks also that the publication of the first six volumes should be accompanied with a full detail of your plan, and an assurance to the public that it was in speedy progress, and would certainly be completed . . . Mr. Scott is so sanguine about this plan, that I believe he means to propose to you to embark £500 or £1000 in it. I wish to God I had any money to embark."

This undertaking eventually fell through. Only the works of De Foe were printed by the Messrs. Ballantyne, and published by Mr. Murray. The attention of the latter became absorbed by a subject of much greater importance to him—the establishment of the *Quarterly Review*. This for a time threw most of his other schemes into the shade.

Another enterprise in which the Ballantynes endeavoured to induce Mr. Murray to take a share was the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, of which James Ballantyne was to be editor, and to which Scott, Mackenzie, Erskine, and Prof. Leslie were to be contributors. One-twelfth share was offered to Mr. Murray, and similar portions were offered to other London booksellers.

"I look forward," wrote the sanguine James, "to this work as to an inheritance; for the assistance I have received is of the most splendid kind. Mr. Scott's words were, 'Ballantyne, tell Murray not to be hasty in rejecting these shares. If the other parties hesitate and refuse, tell him by all means to take them himself.'"

We must not close this chapter without mentioning a publication, differing widely, indeed, in character from those previously dealt with, but which has always been closely associated with Mr. Murray's name, and if success be a gauge of merit, may be called one of his principal achievements.

It has been suggested that the cares of housekeeping first turned Mr. Murray's attention to cookery ; be this as it may, there can be no doubt that Mrs. Rundell's '*Domestic Cookery*' owed much of its success to Mr. Murray's happy choice of a title, of which he was not a little proud. Mrs. Rundell, an old family friend of the publisher, was connected with the well-known firm of Rundell and Bridges, silversmiths. Her book, as originally submitted, was subsequently so much enlarged, altered, and improved, in accordance with Murray's suggestions, as to be rendered practically a new work. Previous cookery books had not done justice to the domestic element ; they had been written by French cooks chiefly for tavern use, and were both bad and dear. The new cookery book met a great domestic want of the British housewife, and proved a great success. From five to ten thousand copies were printed yearly, and it long continued a favourite with the public.

## CHAPTER V.

## ORIGIN OF THE 'QUARTERLY REVIEW.'

THE publication of a Tory Review was not the result of a sudden inspiration. The scheme had long been pondered over. Mr. Canning had impressed upon Mr. Pitt the importance of securing the newspaper press, then almost entirely Whiggish or Revolutionary, on the side of his administration. To combat, in some measure, the democratic principles then in full swing, Mr. Canning, with others, started, in November 1797, the *Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner*.

The *Anti-Jacobin* ceased to be published in 1798, when Canning, having been appointed Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, found his time fully occupied by the business of his department, as well as by his parliamentary duties, and could no longer take part in that clever publication.

Four years later, in October 1802, the first number of the *Edinburgh Review* was published. It appeared at the right time, and, as the first quarterly organ of the higher criticism, evidently hit the mark at which it aimed. In its early days the criticism was rude, and wanting in delicate insight; for the most part too dictatorial, and often unfair. It was conducted by some of the cleverest literary young men in Edinburgh—Jeffrey, Brougham, Sydney Smith,

Francis Horner, Dr. Thomas Brown, and others. Though Walter Scott was not a founder of the *Review*, he was a frequent contributor.

Jeffrey could never appreciate the merits of Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge. "This will never do!" was the commencement of his review of Wordsworth's noblest poem. Jeffrey boasted that he had "crushed the 'Excursion.'" "He might as well say," observed Southey, "that he could crush Skiddaw." Miss Seward, whose 'Life of Dr. Darwin' had received a cutting notice, wrote to Scott: "Jefferies ought to have been his name. Ignorance and envy are the only possible parents of such criticisms as disgrace the publication which assumes the name of your city."

Ignorance seems to have pervaded the article written by Brougham, in the second number of the *Edinburgh*, on Dr. Thomas Young's discovery of the true principles of interferences in the undulatory theory of light. Brougham was then only twenty-four years old, and he undertook to condemn the principles upon which science had set its seal. Sir John Herschell said of Young's discovery, that it was sufficient of itself to have placed its author in the highest rank of scientific immortality.

The articles contained in some of the early numbers of the *Edinburgh* made many enemies, especially in politics. The Government was bitterly denounced, whether its measures were good or bad. Mr. Murray observing with indignation the undue power acquired by the northern *Review*, the roughshod way in which it endeavoured to crush down rising authors and men of science, as well as its extreme democratic views, while there was no other periodical publication to counteract its influence, resolved to address Mr. Canning in the following letter.

*John Murray to the Right Hon. George Canning.*

September 25th, 1807.

SIR,

I venture to address you upon a subject that is not, perhaps, undeserving of one moment of your attention. There is a work entitled the *Edinburgh Review*, written with such unquestionable talent that it has already attained an extent of circulation not equalled by any similar publication. The principles of this work are, however, so radically bad that I have been led to consider the effect that such sentiments, so generally diffused, are likely to produce, and to think that some means equally popular ought to be adopted to counteract their dangerous tendency. But the publication in question is conducted with so much ability, and is sanctioned with such high and decisive authority by the party of whose opinions it is the organ, that there is little hope of producing against it any effectual opposition, unless it arise from you, Sir, and your friends. Should you, Sir, think the idea worthy of encouragement, I should, with equal pride and willingness, engage my arduous exertions to promote its success; but as my object is nothing short of producing a work of the greatest talent and importance, I shall entertain it no longer if it be not so fortunate as to obtain the high patronage which I have thus taken the liberty to solicit.

Permit me, Sir, to add that the person who addresses you is no adventurer, but a man of some property, and inheriting a business that has been established for nearly a century. I therefore trust that my application will be attributed to its proper motives, and that your goodness will at least pardon its obtrusion.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most humble and obedient Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

So far as can be ascertained, Mr. Canning did not answer this letter in writing. But a communication was shortly after opened with him through Mr. Stratford Canning, whose acquaintance Mr. Murray had made through the

publication of the 'Miniature,' referred to in a preceding chapter. Mr. Canning was still acting as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and was necessarily cautious of committing himself to a project which was meant to embrace political objects, and which might embarrass him in his political position. Mr. Stratford Canning, his cousin, was not bound by any such official restraints. In January 1808 he introduced Mr. Gifford to Mr. Murray, and the starting of the proposed new periodical was the subject of many consultations between them. It was some time, however, before any practical steps could be adopted.

Walter Scott still continued to write for the *Edinburgh*, notwithstanding the differences of opinion which existed between himself and the editor as to political questions. He was rather proud of the *Review*, inasmuch as it was an outgrowth of Scottish literature. Moreover, it kept authors and literary men up to the mark, and though it crushed the seemingly weak, it stimulated the strong. Scott even endeavoured to enlist new contributors, for the purpose of strengthening the *Review*. He wrote to Robert Southey in May 1807, inviting him to contribute to the *Edinburgh*. The honorarium was to be ten guineas per sheet of sixteen pages. This was a very tempting invitation to Southey, as he was by no means rich at the time, and the pay was more than he received for his contributions to the *Annual Register*. But he replied to Scott as follows:—

*Mr. Southey to Mr. Scott.*

June, 1807.

"I have scarcely one opinion in common with it (the *Edinburgh Review*) upon any subject. . . . Whatever of any merit I might insert there would aid and abet opinions hostile to my own, and thus identify me with a system which I thoroughly disapprove. This is not said hastily.



The emolument to be derived from writing at ten guineas a sheet, Scotch measure, instead of seven pounds for the *Annual*, would be considerable ; the pecuniary advantage resulting from the different manner in which my future works would be handled [by the *Review*] probably still more so. But my moral feelings must not be compromised. To Jeffrey as an individual I shall ever be ready to show every kind of individual courtesy ; but of Judge Jeffrey of the *Edinburgh Review* I must ever think and speak as of a bad politician, a worse moralist, and a critic, in matters of taste, equally incompetent and unjust." \*

Walter Scott, however, was very soon led to entertain the same views of the *Edinburgh Review* as Southey. A severe and unjust review of 'Marmion,' by Jeffrey, appeared in 1808, accusing Scott of a mercenary spirit in writing for money (though Jeffrey himself was writing for money in the same article), and further irritating Scott by asserting that he "had neglected Scottish feelings and Scottish characters." Scott was much nettled by these observations. He at once severed his connection with Constable, not so much because of his conduct, but because of the intemperate remarks of Hunter, Constable's partner. Hunter had already been the cause of disagreement between Constable & Company and the Longmans, and now he broke off the connection betwixt Constable and Scott. And perhaps to this circumstance, as well as to Jeffrey's biting review, may be ascribed Scott's early connection with the foundation of the *Quarterly*. "Constable," writes Scott to his brother Thomas, in November 1808, "or rather that Bear, his partner, has behaved by me of late not very civilly, and I owe Jeffrey a flap with a foxtail on account of his review of 'Marmion,' and thus doth the whirligig of time bring about my revenges."

\* 'The Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey,' iii. pp. 124-5.

Murray, too, was greatly annoyed by the review of 'Marmion.' "Scott" he used to say, "may forgive but he can never forget this treatment;" and, to quote the words of Mr. Lockhart: "When he read the article on 'Marmion,' and another on foreign politics, in the same number of the *Edinburgh Review*, Murray said to himself, 'Walter Scott has feelings, both as a gentleman and a Tory, which these people must now have wounded; the alliance between him and the whole clique of the *Edinburgh Review* is now shaken;'" and, as far at least as the political part of the affair was concerned, John Murray's sagacity was not at fault.

Mr. Murray at once took advantage of this opening to draw closer the bonds between himself and Ballantyne, for he well knew who was the leading spirit in the firm, and was desirous of obtaining the London agency of the publishing business, which, as he rightly discerned, would soon be started in connection with the Canongate Press, and in opposition to Constable. The large increase of work which Murray was prepared to place in the hands of the printers induced Ballantyne to invite him to come as far as Ferrybridge in Yorkshire for a personal conference. At this interview various new projects were discussed—among them the proposed Novelists' Library—and from the information which he then obtained as to Scott's personal feelings and literary projects, Murray considered himself justified in at once proceeding to Ashiestiel, in order to lay before Scott himself, in a personal interview, his great scheme for the new *Review*. He arrived there about the middle of October 1808, and was hospitably welcomed and entertained. He stated his plans, mentioned the proposed editor of the *Review*, the probable contributors, and earnestly invited the assistance of Scott himself.

During Murray's visit to Ashiestiel No. 26 of the *Edin-*

*burgh Review* arrived. It contained an article entitled "Don Cevallos on the Occupation of Spain." It was long supposed that the article was written by Brougham, but it has since been ascertained that Jeffrey himself was the author of it. This article gave great offence to the friends of rational liberty and limited monarchy in this country. Scott forthwith wrote to Constable:—"The *Edinburgh Review* had become such as to render it impossible for me to become a contributor to it; now it is such as I can no longer continue to receive or read it."

"The list of the then subscribers," said Mr. Cadell to Mr. Lockhart, "exhibits, in an indignant dash of Constable's pen opposite Mr. Scott's name, the word 'STOP!'"

Mr. Murray never forgot his visit to Ashestiel. Scott was kindness itself; Mrs. Scott was equally cordial and hospitable. Richard Heber was there at the time, and the three went out daily to explore the scenery of the neighbourhood. They visited Melrose Abbey, the Tweed, and Dryburgh Abbey, not very remote from Melrose, where Scott was himself to lie; they ascended the Eildon Hills, Scott on his sheltie often stopping by the way to point out to Murray and Heber, who were on foot, some broad meadow or heather-clad ground, as a spot where some legend held its seat, or some notable deed had been achieved during the wars of the Borders. Scott thus converted the barren hillside into a region of interest and delight. From the top of the Eildons he pointed out the scene of some twenty battles.

Very soon after his return to London, Murray addressed the following letter to Mr. Scott:—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

October 26th, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

Although the pressure of business since my return to London has prevented me writing to you sooner, yet my thoughts have, I assure you, been almost completely employed upon the important subjects of the conversation with which you honoured me during the time I was experiencing the obliging hospitality of Mrs. Scott and yourself at Ashestiel.

Mr. Murray then proceeded to discuss the question of the Novelists' Library, described in the preceding chapter, and continued :—

This project is tolerably mechanical, and does not require in its production the mental energies of every kind which are indispensable in the other grand plan of a REVIEW, which I perceive to be imperiously demanded. You have probably seen the advertisement of the *New Review*, which is to appear from the shop of the publisher of the *Satirist*, each critique to be signed by its author, and the whole phalanx to be headed by the notorious veteran Richard Cumberland, Esq. The miserable existence of such a Review cannot possibly linger beyond the third number; but it assists in showing practically how much a good Review is wanted in London by every class. I understand—indeed, I may say with certainty—that Marmion is to be the second article in the first number, after Fox, and it will probably bear the signature of your friend Cumberland himself. It happens very luckily, both for himself and the admirers of this gentleman, that he is about to publish a novel (now in the press), 'John de Lancaster,' in which he relies upon his talents as a writer, and his moral character as a man; for, having made two or three slips in former novels, he intends in this work to give his recantation, so that, whatever figure he may make in his own Review, he would certainly be a most admirable subject, and it will be hard if, upon this occasion, he does not receive that justice which his writings and character have so long merited. But I am diverging too much. I have seen Mr. William

Gifford, hinting distantly at a Review ; he admitted the most imperious necessity for one, and that too in a way that leads me to think that he has had very important communications upon the subject. He has been so obliging as to give me a work by the learned Dr. Ireland to publish. This is one of those gentlemen whom you may remember to have been suggested by Mr. Heber as capable of contributing to our Review. I feel more than ever confident that the higher powers are exceedingly desirous for the establishment of some counteracting publication ; and it will, I suspect, remain only for your appearance in London to urge some very formidable plan into activity. I will trouble you no further upon these subjects until I am favoured with your wishes, and I will only add, that you shall ever find me active and faithful. I trust that Mrs. Scott and the family have returned with you in perfect health, and that you are preparing for your journey to London. I beg leave to offer my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Scott, and to assure you that

I remain, with the highest esteem, Dear Sir,

Your obliged and obedient Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

This letter was crossed in transit by the following :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Ashestiel, by Selkirk, October 30th, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

Since I had the pleasure of seeing you I have the satisfaction to find that Mr. Gifford has accepted the task of editing the intended Review. This was communicated to me by the Lord Advocate, who at the same time requested me to write Mr. Gifford on the subject. I have done so at great length, pointing out whatever occurred to me on the facilities or difficulties of the work in general, as well as on the editorial department, offering at the same time all the assistance in my power to set matters upon a good footing and to keep them so. I presume he will have my letter by the time this reaches you, and that he will communicate with you fully upon the details. I am as

certain as of my existence that the plan will answer, provided sufficient attention is used in procuring and selecting articles of merit.\*

What Scott thought of Murray's visit to Ashestiel may be inferred from his letter to his political confidant, George Ellis, of which, as it has already appeared in Scott's Life, it is only necessary to give extracts here:—

*Mr. Scott to Mr. George Ellis.*

November 2nd, 1808.

DEAR ELLIS,

We had, equally to our joy and surprise, a flying visit from Heber about three weeks ago. He staid but three days, but, between old stories and new, we made them very merry in their passage. During his stay, John Murray, the bookseller in Fleet Street, who has more real knowledge of what concerns his business than any of his brethren—at least, than any of them that I know—came to canvass a most important plan, of which I am now, in “dern privacie,” to give you the outline. I had most strongly recommended to our Lord Advocate (the Right Hon. J. C. Colquhoun) to think of some counter measures against the *Edinburgh Review*, which, politically speaking, is doing incalculable damage. I do not mean this in a party way; the present ministry are not all I could wish them, for (Canning excepted) I doubt there is among them too much *self-seeking*. . . . But their political principles are sound English principles, and, compared to the greedy and inefficient horde which preceded them, they are angels of light and purity. It is obvious, however, that they want defenders, both in and out of doors. Pitt's

“Love and fear glued many friends to him;  
And now he's fallen, those tough co-mixtures melt.”

Were this only to effect a change of hands I should expect it with more indifference; but I fear a change of principles

\* The remainder of this letter, which deals with the proposed Novelists' Library, is printed in the preceding chapter.

is designed. The *Edinburgh Review* tells you coolly, "We foresee a speedy revolution in this country as well as Mr. Cobbett;" and, to say the truth, by degrading the person of the Sovereign, exalting the power of the French armies and the wisdom of their counsels, holding forth that peace (which they allow can only be purchased by the humiliating prostration of our honour) is indispensable to the very existence of our country, I think that for these two years past they have done their utmost to hasten the accomplishment of their own prophecy. Of this work 9000 copies are printed quarterly, and no genteel family *can* pretend to be without it, because, independent of its politics, it gives the only valuable literary criticism which can be met with. Consider, of the numbers who read this work, how many are there likely to separate the literature from the politics?—how many youths are there upon whose minds the flashy and bold character of the work is likely to make an indelible impression?—and think what the consequence is likely to be.

Now, I think there is balm in Gilead for all this, and that the cure lies in instituting such a Review in London as should be conducted totally independent of bookselling influence, on a plan as liberal as that of the *Edinburgh*, its literature as well supported, and its principles English and constitutional. Accordingly, I have been given to understand that Mr. William Gifford is willing to become the conductor of such a work, and I have written to him, at the Lord Advocate's desire, a very voluminous letter on the subject. Now, should this plan succeed, you must hang your birding-piece on its hook, take down your old Anti-Jacobin armour, and "remember your swashing blow." It is not that I think this projected Review ought to be exclusively or principally political; this would, in my opinion, absolutely counteract its purpose, which I think should be to offer to those who love their country, and to those whom we would wish to love it, a periodical work of criticism conducted with equal talent, but upon sounder principles. Is not this very possible? In point of learning, you Englishmen have ten times our scholarship; and, as for talent and genius, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than any of the rivers in Israel?" Have we not yourself and your cousin, the Roses, Malthus, Matthias, Gifford, Heber, and his brother? Can I not

procure you a score of blue-caps who would rather write for us than for the *Edinburgh Review* if they got as much pay by it? "A good plot, good friends, and full of expectation—an excellent plot, very good friends!"

Heber's fear was lest we should fail in procuring regular steady contributors; but I know so much of the interior discipline of reviewing as to have no apprehension of that. Provided we are once set a-going by a few dashing numbers, there would be no fear of enlisting regular contributors; but the amateurs must bestir themselves in the first instance. From the Government we should be entitled to expect confidential communications as to points of fact (so far as fit to be made public) in our political disquisitions. With this advantage, our good cause and St. George to boot, we may at least divide the field with our formidable competitors, who, after all, are much better at cutting than parrying, and whose uninterrupted triumph has as much unfitted them for resisting a serious attack as it has done Buonaparte for the Spanish war. Jeffrey is, to be sure, a man of the most uncommon versatility of talent, but what then?

"General Howe is a gallant commander,  
There are others as gallant as he."

Think of all this, and let me hear from you very soon on the subject. Canning is, I have good reason to know, very anxious about the plan. I mentioned it to Robert Dundas, who was here with his lady for a few days on a pilgrimage to Melrose, and he highly approved of it. Though no literary man, he is judicious, *clair-voyant*, and uncommonly sound-headed, like his father, Lord Melville. With the exceptions I have mentioned, the thing continues a secret . . . .

Ever yours,

WALTER SCOTT.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

November 2nd, 1808.

I transmitted my letter to Mr. Gifford through the Lord Advocate, and left it open that Mr. Canning might read it if he thought it worth while. I have a letter from the



Advocate highly approving my views, so I suppose you will very soon hear from Mr. Gifford specifically on the subject. It is a matter of immense consequence that something shall be set about, and that without delay. I am truly surprised at the inexhaustible activity of Mr. Cumberland's spirit. His proposed *Review*\* cannot be very long-lived—I hope *ours* stands a better chance of longevity. I am truly vexed at being kept in my present state of uncertainty concerning my motions southwards.

The points on which I chiefly insisted with Mr. Gifford were that the *Review* should be independent both as to bookselling and ministerial influences—meaning that we were not to be advocates of party through thick and thin, but to maintain constitutional principles. Moreover, I stated as essential that the literary part of the work should be as sedulously attended to as the political, because it is by means of that alone that the work can acquire any firm and extended reputation.

Moreover yet, I submitted that each contributor should draw money for his article, be his rank what it may. This general rule has been of great use to the *Edinburgh Review*. Of terms I said nothing, except that your views on the subject seemed to me highly liberal. I do not add further particulars because I dare say Mr. Gifford will show you the letter, which is a very long one.—Believe me, my dear Sir, with sincere regard,

Your faithful, humble Servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

In a subsequent letter to Mr. Ellis, Scott again indicates what he considers should be the proper management of the proposed *Review*.

“Let me touch,” he says, “a string of much delicacy—the political character of the *Review*. It appears to me that this should be of a liberal and enlarged nature, resting upon principles—indulgent and conciliatory as far as possible upon mere party questions, but stern in detecting and exposing all attempts to sap our constitutional fabric. Religion is another slippery station; here also I would endeavour

\* The *New Review*, mentioned above.

to be as impartial as the subject will admit of. . . . The truth is, there is policy, as well as morality, in keeping our swords clear as well as sharp, and not forgetting the Gentleman in the Critic. The public appetite is soon gorged with any particular style. The common Reviews, before the appearance of the *Edinburgh*, had become extremely mawkish ; and, unless when prompted by the malice of the bookseller or reviewer, gave a dawdling, maudlin sort of applause to everything that reached even mediocrity. The *Edinburgh* folks squeezed into their sauce plenty of acid, and were popular from novelty as well as from merit. The minor Reviews, and other periodical publications, have *outriv'd* the matter still further, and given us all abuse and no talent. . . . This, therefore, we have to trust to, that decent, lively, and reflecting criticism, teaching men not to abuse books, but to read and to judge them, will have the effect of novelty upon a public wearied with universal efforts at blackguard and indiscriminating satire. I have a long and very sensible letter\* from John Murray, the bookseller, in which he touches upon this point very neatly."

Scott was most assiduous in his preparations for the first number. He wrote to his brother, Thomas Scott, asking him to contribute an article ; to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, of Christ Church, Oxford ; to Mr. Morritt, of Rokeby Park, Yorkshire ; and to Robert Southey, of Keswick, asking them for contributions. To Mr. Sharpe he says :—

"The Hebers are engaged, item Rogers, Southey, Moore (Anacreon), and others whose reputations Jeffrey has murdered, and who are rising to cry woe upon him, like the ghosts in 'King Richard.'"

Scott's letter to Gifford, the intended editor, was full of excellent advice. It was dated "Edinburgh, October 25th, 1808." We quote from it several important passages :—

"John Murray, of Fleet Street," says Scott, "a young bookseller of capital and enterprise, and with more good sense and propriety of sentiment than fall to the share of

\* Given below, under date Nov. 15, 1808.

most of the trade, made me a visit at Ashestiel a few weeks ago ; and as I found he had had some communication with you upon the subject, I did not hesitate to communicate my sentiments to him on this and some other points of the plan, and I thought his ideas were most liberal and satisfactory.

“The office of Editor is of such importance, that had you not been pleased to undertake it, I fear the plan would have fallen wholly to the ground. The full power of control must, of course, be vested in the editor for selecting, curtailing, and correcting the contributions to the Review. But this is not all ; for, as he is the person immediately responsible to the bookseller that the work (amounting to a certain number of pages, more or less) shall be before the public at a certain time, it will be the editor's duty to consider in due turn the articles of which each number ought to consist, and to take measures for procuring them from the persons best qualified to write upon such and such subjects. But this is sometimes so troublesome, that I foresee with pleasure you will soon be obliged to abandon your resolution of writing nothing yourself. At the same time, if you will accept of my services as a sort of jackal or lion's provider, I will do all in my power to assist in this troublesome department of editorial duty.

“But there is still something behind, and that of the last consequence. One great resource to which the *Edinburgh* editor turns himself, and by which he gives popularity even to the duller articles of his *Review*, is accepting contributions from persons of inferior powers of writing, provided they understand the books to which their criticisms relate ; and as such are often of stupifying mediocrity, he renders them palatable by throwing in a handful of spice, namely, any lively paragraph or entertaining illustration that occurs to him in reading them over. By this sort of veneering he converts, without loss of time or hindrance to business, articles, which in their original state might hang in the market, into such goods as are not likely to disgrace those among which they are placed. This seems to be a point in which an editor's assistance is of the last consequence, for those who possess the knowledge necessary to review books of research or abstruse disquisitions, are very often unable to put the criticisms into a readable, much more a

pleasant and captivating form; and as their science cannot be attained 'for the nonce,' the only remedy is to supply their deficiencies, and give their lucubrations a more popular turn.

"There is one opportunity possessed by you in a particular degree—that of access to the best sources of political information. It would not, certainly, be advisable that the work should assume, especially at the outset, a professional character. On the contrary, the articles on science and miscellaneous literature ought to be of such a quality as might fairly challenge comparison with the best of our contemporary series. But as the real reason of instituting the publication is the disgusting and deleterious doctrine with which the most popular of our Reviews disgraces its pages, it is essential to consider how this warfare should be managed. On this ground, I hope it is not too much to expect from those who have the power of assisting us, that they should on topics of great national interest furnish the reviewers, through the medium of their editor, with accurate views of points of fact, so far as they are fit to be made public. This is the most delicate and yet most essential part of our scheme.

"On the one hand, it is certainly not to be understood that we are to be held down to advocate upon all occasions the cause of administration. Such a dereliction of independence would render us entirely useless for the purpose we mean to serve. On the other hand, nothing will render the work more interesting than the public learning, not from any vaunt of ours, but from their own observation, that we have access to early and accurate information on points of fact. The *Edinburgh Review* has profited much by the pains which the Opposition party have taken to possess the writers of all the information they could give them on public matters. Let me repeat that you, my dear sir, from enjoying the confidence of Mr. Canning, and other persons in power, may easily obtain the confidential information necessary to give credit to the work, and communicate it to such as you may think proper to employ in laying it before the public."

Mr. Scott further proceeded, in his letter to Mr. Gifford, to discuss the mode and time of publication, the choice of subjects, the persons to be employed as contributors, and

the name of the proposed Review, thus thoroughly identifying himself with it.

"Let our forces," he said, "for a number or two, consist of volunteers or amateurs, and when we have acquired some reputation, we shall soon levy and discipline our forces of the line. After all, the matter is become very serious—eight or nine thousand copies of the *Edinburgh Review* are regularly distributed, merely because there is no other respectable and independent publication of the kind. In this city (Edinburgh), where there is not one Whig out of twenty men who read the work, many hundreds are sold; and how long the generality of readers will continue to dislike politics, so artfully mingled with information and amusement, is worthy of deep consideration. But it is not yet too late to stand in the breach; the first number ought, if possible, to be out in January, and if it can burst among them like a bomb, without previous notice, the effect will be more striking.

"Of those who might be intrusted in the first instance you are a much better judge than I am. I think I can command the assistance of a friend or two here, particularly William Erskine, the Lord Advocate's brother-in-law and my most intimate friend. In London, you have Malthus, George Ellis, the Roses, *cum pluribus aliis*. Richard Heber was with me when Murray came to my farm, and, knowing his zeal for the good cause, I let him into our counsels. In Mr. Frere we have the hopes of a potent ally. The Rev. Reginald Heber would be an excellent coadjutor, and when I come to town I will sound Matthias. As strict secrecy would of course be observed, the diffidence of many might be overcome. For scholars you can be at no loss while Oxford stands where it did; and I think there will be no deficiency in the scientific articles."

Thus instructed, Gifford proceeded to rally his forces. There was no want of contributors. Some came invited, some came unsought; but, as the matter was still a secret, the editor endeavoured to secure contributions through his personal friends. For instance, he called upon Mr. Rogers to request him to secure the help of Moore.

"I must confess," said Rogers to Moore, "I heard of the new quarterly with pleasure, as I thought it might correct an evil we had long lamented together. Gifford wishes much for contributors, and is exceedingly anxious that you should assist him as often as you can afford time. . . . All this in *confidence* of course, as the secret is not my own."

Gifford also endeavoured to secure the assistance of Southey, through his friend, Mr. Grosvenor Bedford. Southey was requested to write for the first number an article on the Affairs of Spain. This, however, he declined to do; but promised to send an article on the subject of Missionaries.

"Let not Gifford," he wrote to Bedford, in reply to his letter, "suppose me a troublesome man to deal with, pertinacious about trifles, or standing upon punctilios of authorship. No, Grosvenor, I am a quiet, patient, easy-going hack of the male breed; regular as clockwork in my pace, sure-footed, bearing the burden which is laid on me, and only obstinate in choosing my own path. If Gifford could see me by this fireside, where, like Nicodemus, one candle suffices me in a large room, he would see a man in a coat 'still more threadbare than his own' when he wrote his 'Imitation,' working hard and getting little—a bare maintenance, and hardly that; writing poems and history for posterity with his whole heart and soul; one daily progressive in learning, not so learned as he is poor, not so poor as proud, not so proud as happy."

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

October 28th, 1808.

"Well, you have of course heard from Mr. Scott of the progress of the 'Great Plan.' Canning bites at the hook eagerly. A review, termed by Mr. Jeffrey *a tickler*, is to appear of Dryden in this No. of the *Edinburgh*. By the Lord! they will rue it. You know Scott's present feelings, excited by the review of 'Marmion.' What will they be when that of Dryden appears?"

It was some time, however, before arrangements could be finally made for bringing out the first number of the *Quarterly*. Scott could not as yet pay his intended visit to London, and after waiting for about a month, Murray sent him the following letter, giving his further opinion as to the scope and object of the proposed Review:—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

November 15th, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

I have been desirous of writing to you for nearly a week past, as I never felt more the want of a personal conversation. I will endeavour, however, to explain myself to you, and will rely on your confidence and indulgence for secrecy and attention in what I have to communicate. I have before told you that the idea of a new Review has been revolving in my mind for nearly two years, and that more than twelve months ago I addressed Mr. Canning on the subject. The propriety, if not the necessity, of establishing a journal upon principles opposite to those of the *Edinburgh Review* has occurred to many men more enlightened than myself; and I believe the same reason has prevented others, as it has done myself, from attempting it, namely, the immense difficulty of obtaining talent of sufficient magnitude to render success even *doubtful*.

By degrees my plan has gradually floated up to this height. But there exists at least an equal difficulty yet—that peculiar talent in an editor of rendering our other great sources advantageous to the best possible degree. This, I think, may be accomplished, but it must be effected by your arduous assistance, at least for a little time. Our friend Mr. Gifford, whose writings show him to be both a man of learning and wit, has lived too little in the world lately to have obtained that delicacy and tact whereby he can feel at one instant, and habitually, whatever may gratify public desire and excite public attention and curiosity. But this you know to be a leading feature in the talents of Mr. Jeffrey and his friends; and that, without the most happy choice of subjects, as well as the ability to treat them well—catching the “manners living as they

rise"—the *Edinburgh Review* could not have attained the success it has done; and no other Review, however preponderating in solid merit, will obtain sufficient attention without them. Entering the field too, as we shall do, against an army commanded by the most skilful generals, it will not do for us to leave any of our best officers behind as a reserve, for they would be of no use if we were defeated at first. We must enter with our most able commanders at once, and we shall then acquire confidence, if not reputation, and increase in numbers as we proceed.

Our first number must contain the most valuable and striking information in politics, and the most interesting articles of general literature and science, written by our most able friends. If our plan appears to be so advantageous to the ministers whose measures, to a certain extent, we intend to justify, to support, to recommend and assist, that they have promised their support; when might that support be so advantageously given, either for their own interests or ours, as at the commencement, when we are most weak, and have the most arduous onset to make, and when we do and must stand most in need of help? If our first number be not written with the greatest ability, upon the most interesting topics, it will not excite public attention. No man, even the friend of the principles we adopt, will leave the sprightly pages of the *Edinburgh Review* to read a dull detail of staid morality, or dissertations on subjects whose interest has long fled.

I do not say this from any, even the smallest doubt, of our having all that we desire in these respects in our power; but because I am apprehensive that without your assistance it will not be drawn into action, and my reason for this fear I will thus submit to you. You mentioned in your letter to Mr. Gifford, that our Review should open with a grand article on Spain—meaning a display of the political feeling of the people, and the probable results of this important contest. I suggested to Mr. Gifford that Mr. Frere should be written to, which he said was easy, and that he thought he would do it; for Frere could not only give the facts upon the subject, but could write them better than any other person. But having, in my project, given the name of Southey as a person who might assist occasionally in a number or two hence, I found at our next interview that Mr. Gifford, who does not know Mr. Southey, had spoken to a friend to ask



Mr. S. to write the article upon Spain. It is true that Mr. Southey knows a great deal about Spain, and on another occasion would have given a good article upon the subject ; but at present *his* is not the kind of knowledge which we want, and it is, moreover, trusting our secret to a stranger, who has, by the way, a directly opposite bias in politics.

Mr. Gifford also told me, with very great stress, that among the articles he had submitted to you was Hodgson's Translation of Juvenal, which at no time could be a very interesting article for us, and having been published more than six months ago, would probably be a very stupid one. Then, you must observe, that it would necessarily involve a comparison with Mr. Gifford's own translation, which must of course be praised, and thus show an *individual* feeling—the least spark of which, in our early numbers, would both betray and ruin us. He talks of reviewing *himself* a late translation of 'Persius,' for (*entre nous*) a similar reason. He has himself nearly completed a translation, which will be published in a few months.

In what I have said upon this most exceedingly delicate point, and which I again submit to your most honourable confidence, I have no other object but just to show you without reserve how we stand, and to exemplify what I set out with—that without skilful and judicious management we shall totally mistake the road to the accomplishment of the arduous task which we have undertaken, and involve the cause and every individual in not merely defeat, but disgrace. I must at the same time observe that Mr. Gifford is the most obliging and well-meaning man alive, and that he is perfectly ready to be instructed in those points of which his seclusion renders him ignorant ; and all that I wish and mean is, that we should strive to open clearly the view which is so obvious to us—that our first number must be a most brilliant one in every respect ; and to effect this, we must avail ourselves of any valuable political information we can command. Those persons who have the most interest in supporting the Review must be called upon immediately for their strenuous personal help. The fact must be obvious to you, — that if Mr. Canning, Mr. Frere, Mr. Scott, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Gifford, with their immediate and true friends, will exert themselves heartily in every respect, so as to produce with secrecy

only *one* remarkably attractive number, their further labour would be comparatively light. With such a number in our hands, we might select and obtain every other help that we required; and then the persons named would only be called upon for their information, facts, hints, advice, and occasional articles. But without this—without producing a number that shall at least equal, if not excel, the best of the *Edinburgh Review*, it were better not to be attempted. We should do more harm to our cause by an unsuccessful attempt; and the reputation of the *Edinburgh Review* would be increased inversely to our fruitless opposition. . . . With respect to bookselling interference with the Review, I am equally convinced with yourself of its total incompatibility with a really respectable and valuable critical journal. I assure you that nothing can be more distant from my views, which are confined to the ardour which I feel for the cause and principles which it will be our object to support, and the honour of professional reputation which would obviously result to the publisher of so important a work. It were silly to suppress that I shall not be sorry to derive from it as much profit as I can satisfactorily enjoy, consistent with the liberal scale upon which it is my first desire to act towards every writer and friend concerned in the work. Respecting the terms upon which the editor shall be placed at first, I have proposed, and it appears to be satisfactory to Mr. Gifford, that he shall receive, either previous to, or immediately after, the publication of each number, the sum of 160 guineas, which he is to distribute as he thinks proper, without any question or interference on my part; and that in addition to this, he shall receive from me the sum of £200 annually, merely as the editor. This, Sir, is much more than I can flatter myself with the return of, for the first year at least; but it is my intention that his salary shall ever increase proportionately to the success of the work under his management. The editor has a most arduous office to perform, and the success of the publication must depend in a great measure upon his activity.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

It will be observed from this letter, that Mr. Murray was aware that, besides skilful editing, sound and practical business management was necessary to render the new Review a success. The way in which he informs Mr. Scott about Gifford's proposed review of 'Juvenal' and 'Persius,' shows that he fully comprehended the situation, and the dangers which would beset an editor like Gifford, who lived for the most part amongst his books, and was, to a large extent, secluded from the active world.

On the same day Scott was writing to Murray :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, November 15th, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

I received two days ago a letter from Mr. Gifford highly approving of the particulars of the plan which I had sketched for the *Review*. But there are two points to be considered. In the first place, I cannot be in town as I proposed, for the Commissioners under the Judicial Bill, to whom I am to act as clerk, have resolved that their final sittings shall be held *here*, so that I have now no chance of being in London before spring. This is very unlucky, as Mr. Gifford proposes to wait for my arrival in town to set the great machine a-going. I shall write to him that this is impossible, and that I wish he would, with your assistance and that of his other friends, make up a list of the works which the first number is to contain, and consider what is the extent of the aid he will require from the North. The other circumstance is, that Mr. Gifford pleads the state of his health and his retired habits as sequestering him from the world, and rendering him less capable of active exertion, and in the kindest and most polite manner he expresses his hope that he should receive very extensive assistance and support from me, without which he is pleased to say he would utterly despair of success. Now between ourselves (for this is strictly confidential) I am rather alarmed at this prospect. I am willing, and anxiously so, to do all in my power to serve the work ; but, my dear sir, you know how many of our

very ablest hands are engaged in the *Edinburgh Review*, and what a dismal work it will be to wring assistance from the few whose indolence has left them neutral. I can, to be sure, work like a horse myself, but then I have two heavy works on my hands already, namely, 'Somers' and 'Swift.' Constable had lately very nearly relinquished the latter work, and I now heartily wish it had never commenced; but two volumes are nearly printed, so I conclude it will now go on. If this work had not stood in the way, I should have liked Beaumont and Fletcher much better. It would not have required half the research, and occupied much less time. I plainly see that, according to Mr. Gifford's view, I should have almost all the trouble of a co-editor, both in collecting and revising the articles which are to come from Scotland, as well as in supplying all deficiencies from my own stores.

These considerations cannot, however, operate upon the first number, so pray send me a list of books, and perhaps you may send some on a venture. You know the department I had in the *Edinburgh Review*. I will sound Southey, agreeable to Mr. Gifford's wishes, on the Spanish affairs. The last number of the *Edinburgh Review* has given disgust beyond measure, owing to the tone of the article on Cevallos' *exposé*. Subscribers are falling off like withered leaves.

I retired my name among others, after explaining the reasons both to Mr. Jeffrey and Mr. Constable, so that there never was such an opening for a new *Review*. I shall be glad to hear what you think on the subject of terms, for my Northern troops will not move without pay; but there is no hurry about fixing this point, as most of the writers in the first number will be more or less indifferent on the subject. For my own share, I care not what the conditions are, unless the labour expected from me is to occupy a considerable portion of time, in which case they might become an object. While we are on this subject, I may as well mention that as you incur so large an outlay in the case of the Novels, I would not only be happy that my remuneration should depend on the profits of the work, but I also think I could command a few hundreds to assist in carrying it on.

By the way, I see 'Notes on Don Quixote' advertised. This was a plan I had for enriching our collection, having

many references by me for the purpose. I shall be sorry if I am powerfully anticipated. Perhaps the book would make a good article in the *Review*. Can you get me 'Gaytoun's Festivous Notes on Don Quixote?'

I think our friend Ballantyne is grown an inch taller on the subjects of the 'Romances.'

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

Gifford is much pleased with you personally.

Meanwhile the breach between Scott and the *Edinburgh Review* was being widened.

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

November 21st, 1808.

You have no doubt heard, ere this time, of the universal indignation and disgust which the last number of the *Edinburgh Review* has given. Many people have given it up, and, if I may judge from what I hear, the general dissatisfaction is increasing. Mr. Scott was, I believe, the first who discontinued it. Constable was greatly affected by the annunciation; and I tell you in *entire confidence* that, from the aid which Mr. Scott determines to give your glorious work, and other causes, he anticipates an entire rupture with that house. He further told me, that if that event took place, *you*, if you chose it, should have the first offer of his future works. Indeed, he on every occasion expresses himself respecting you in the most flattering terms of approbation and respect.

Scott was very desirous of enlisting George Canning among the contributors to the *Quarterly*. He wrote to his friend Ellis:—

*Mr. Scott to Mr. G. Ellis.*

'As our start is of such immense consequence, don't you think Mr. Canning, though unquestionably our Atlas, might for a day find a Hercules on whom to devolve the

burden of the globe, while he writes for us a review? I know what an audacious request this is, but suppose he should, as great statesmen sometimes do, take a political fit of the gout, and absent himself from a large ministerial dinner which might give it him in good earnest—dine at three on a chicken and pint of wine, and lay the foundation of at least one good article? Let us but once get afloat, and our labour is not worth talking about; but, till then, all hands must work hard.”

This suggestion was communicated by George Ellis to Gifford, the chosen editor, who was in frequent communication with Canning; and a few days after the above letter was written, Gifford addressed the following note to Murray:—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

November 29th, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am sorry I was from home when you called; but Mr. Canning would not let me return till he came back himself, and he has this moment set me down at my door. . . . You will be glad to hear that Mr. Ellis has readily undertaken the Spanish article, but of this more when we meet.

Yours, &c.,

WM. GIFFORD.

The support of Mr. Canning was eventually secured, as well as that of Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Frere, and Mr. Long. Murray again wrote to Scott, assuring him of the active countenance and support of these, as well as other able contributors. Southey, besides his article on “Missionary Enterprise,” had promised another on the “Life of Bruce, the Abyssinian Traveller.”

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

Nov. 19th, 1808.

“Mr. Gifford has communicated to me an important piece of news. He met his friend, Lord Teignmouth.

and learned from him that he and the Wilberforce party had some idea of starting a journal to oppose the *Edinburgh Review*, that Henry Thornton and Mr. [Zachary] Macaulay were to be the conductors, that they had met, and that some able men were mentioned. Upon sounding Lord T. as to their giving us their assistance, he thought this might be adopted in preference to their own plans. . . . It will happen fortunately that we intend opening with an article on the missionaries, which, as it will be written in opposition to the sentiments in the *Edinburgh Review*, is very likely to gain that large body of which Wilberforce is the head. I have collected from every Missionary Society in London, of which there are no less than five, all their curious reports, proceedings and history, which, I know, Sydney Smith never saw; and which I could only procure by personal application. Southey will give a complete view of the subject, and if he will enter heartily into it, and do it well, it will be as much as he can do for the first number. These transactions contain, amidst a great deal of fanaticism, the most curious information you can imagine upon the history, literature, topography and manners of nations and countries of which we are otherwise totally ignorant. . . . If you have occasion to write to Southey, pray urge the vast importance of this subject, and entreat him to give it all his ability. I find that a new volume of Burns' ('The Reliques') will be published by the end of this month, which will form the subject of another capital article under your hands. I presume 'Sir John Carr (Tour in Scotland)' will be another article, which even you, I fancy, will like; 'Mrs. Grant of Laggan,' too, and perhaps your friend Mr. Cumberland's 'John de Lancaster.' . . . Are you not sufficiently well acquainted with Miss (Joanna) Baillie, both to confide in her, and command her talents? If so, you will probably think of what may suit her, and what may apply to her. Mr. Heber, too, would apply to his brother at your request, and his friend Coplestone, who will also be written to by a friend of Gifford's. . . . Would you also urge Mr. S. particularly upon the opening article on Spain, which should contain the most valuable information, and, at the same time, be written with the utmost possible care and ability."

About the date of publication of the first number, Mr. Murray proceeded:—

“Mr. Long expresses his doubts about publishing the first number in January next, and entreats the greatest consideration in every line, as so much depends on the first number; and, therefore, I proposed that, although every contributor should be required to send in his article by January 10th, yet that the time of publication should be determined merely by that moment when we are satisfied that we have got a really valuable number.”

On the 1st of December, Murray informed Scott that the article on Spain was proceeding under Mr. Canning's immediate superintendence. Canning and Gifford went down to Mr. Ellis's house at Sunninghill, where the three remained together for four days, during which time the article was hatched and completed. Mr. Murray further communicated that Mr. Rogers and Thomas Moore were likely to be secured as contributors; that Mr. Sotheby was proceeding with an article; that Mr. Hoppner was reviewing Lord Orford's ‘Anecdotes of Painters;’ and that two or three able hands were upon the point of employment at Oxford and Cambridge. “In fact,” he says, “by the end of this month I think the machine will be in motion.”

Mr. Scott's reply not only indicates his energy on behalf of the *Quarterly*, but shows that already the toils of the Ballantyne business were closing around him, and that the demands of the presses were inexorable.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, December 14th, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad to see you are all activity. I will soon forward you reviews of Burns' fifth volume and of the ‘Cid,’ and hope they will not disgrace my coadjutors. Bruce's ‘Life’



is undertaken by Josiah Walker, who, I think, may do it well, as he knew the Abyssinian personally.

I know a young friend who, I think, will do Holmes' 'America' well, but I cannot find the book in Edinburgh, and must trouble you to get a copy forwarded. My friend Mr. Erskine talks of reviewing Curran's 'Speeches' and McNeil's new poem, which hath just come forth from the shop of Mr. Constable. I have sent to my brother Lewis's 'Romances' and the American tale by Mrs. Grant. Any of these contributions which may be unnecessary for the first number may be laid aside till wanted. Our friend Ballantyne has been requested\* by a number of literary gentlemen here to edit an Annual Register. The Mackenzies, father and son, Lord Meadowbank, William Erskine, I myself (quothe the wren), and several other persons of good literary reputation are concerned. We mean for certain reasons to keep a considerable number of shares ourselves, but Ballantyne has been empowered to offer some to the London trade. As the thing promises extremely well, I shall be glad to find that you engage in it, for I assure you every nerve will be strained to render it worthy of public acceptance. Ballantyne's own share in this concern is not very great, but I think it will lead to his acting as Scottish publisher in other instances. Indeed, Mr. Constable's favours being a good deal withdrawn from him, and a very large proportion both of the literary and political world being desirous to have an Edinburgh publisher of activity and judgment, as well as constitutional principles, I have no doubt of his succeeding in an eminent degree, and being of the greatest service to his friends in London, as they may be to him reciprocally. This, however, is as yet barely in prospect, and therefore I beg you will take no notice to Ballantyne that I hinted at such a matter, as I know whenever his resolution is fixed you will be the first to whom he will communicate it. From what I have learned, he will neither want funds nor friends, and Constable's migration of a part of his stock to London seems favourable to the success of such an undertaking.

\* According to Mr. Lockhart, Ballantyne informed Murray at their interview at Ferrybridge that the "author of 'Marmion' had chalked out the design of an *Edinburgh Annual Register*, to be conducted in opposition to the politics and criticism of Constable's *Review*."

I will certainly give it all the aid in my power, having the greatest reason to complain of Mr. Hunter's behaviour towards me, although I retain great good-will to Constable as an individual

I beg my compliments to Mr. Gifford, and believe me, my dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

On receiving the celebrated 'Declaration of Westminster' on the Spanish War, Scott wrote to Ellis:—

"Tell Mr. Canning that the old women of Scotland will defend the country with their distaffs, rather than that troops enough be not sent to make good so noble a pledge. Were the thousands that have mouldered away in petty conquests or Lilliputian expeditions united to those we have now in that country, what a band would Sir John Moore have under him! . . . Jeffrey has offered terms of pacification, engaging that no party politics should again appear in his *Review*. I told him I thought it was now too late, and reminded him that I had often pointed out to him the consequences of letting his work become a party tool. He said 'he did not fear for the consequences—there were but four men he feared as opponents.' 'Who are these?' 'Yourself for one.' 'Certainly you pay me a great compliment; depend upon it I will endeavour to deserve it.' 'Why, you would not join against me?' 'Yes, I would, if I saw a proper opportunity: not against you personally, but against your politics.' 'You are privileged to be violent.' 'I don't ask any privilege for undue violence. But who are your other foemen?' 'George Ellis and Southey.' The other he did not name. All this was in great good humour; and next day I had a very affecting note from him, in answer to an invitation to dinner. He has no suspicion of the *Review* whatever."

In the meantime, Mr. Murray continued to look out for further contributors. Mr. James Mill, of the India House, promised (in December 1808) an article by Mr. Lowe on the West India Question, "a question," says Mr. Mill, "which he would be very well pleased to communicate to

the public through so respectable a channel as your new work." On forwarding the article, Mr. Mill said :—

"If I have any objection to it, it is this, that he (Mr. Lowe) does not show the connection between the book he reviews and the argument which forms the principal part of his critique in a light sufficiently strong. This he should be made to alter. There will be time enough for it, if you and your editor are sufficiently pleased with the latter part of it to reserve a place for the article."

Mr. Mill adds :—

"You do me a great deal of honour in the solicitude you express to have me engaged in laying the foundation stone of your new edifice, which I hope will be both splendid and durable; and it is no want of zeal or gratitude that delays me. But this ponderous Geography, a porter's, or rather a horse's load, bears me down to a degree you can hardly conceive. What I am now meditating from under it is to spare time to do well and leisurely the Indian article (my favourite subject) for your next number. Besides, I shall not reckon myself less a founder from its having been only the fault of my previous engagements that my first article for you appears only in the second number, and not in the first part of your work."

Another contributor whom Mr. Murray was desirous to secure was Mrs. Inchbald, authoress of the 'Simple Story.' The application was made to her through one of Murray's intimate friends, Mr. Hoppner, the artist. Her answer was as follows :—

*Mrs. Inchbald to Mr. Hoppner.*

December 31st, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR,

As I wholly rely upon your judgment for the excellency of the design in question, I wish you to be better acquainted with my abilities as a reviewer before I suffer my curiosity to be further gratified in respect to the plan of the work you have undertaken, or the names of those persons who,

with yourself, have done me the very great honour to require my assistance. Before I see you, then, and possess myself of your further confidence, it is proper that I should acquaint you that there is only one department of a Review for which I am in the least qualified, and that one combines plays and novels. Yet the very few novels I have read, of later publications, incapacitates me again for detecting plagiarism, or for making such comparisons as proper criticism may demand. You will, perhaps, be surprised when I tell you that I am not only wholly unacquainted with the book you have mentioned to me, but that I never heard of it before. If it be in French, there will be another insurmountable difficulty; for, though I read French, and have translated some French comedies, yet I am not so perfectly acquainted with the language as to dare to write remarks upon a French author. If Madame Cottin's 'Malvina' be in English, you wish it speedily reviewed, and can possibly have any doubt of the truth of my present report, please to send it me; and whatever may be the contents, I will immediately essay my abilities on the work, or immediately return it as a hopeless case.

Yours very faithfully,

E. INCHBALD.

On further consideration, however, Mrs. Inchbald modestly declined to become a contributor. Notwithstanding her great merits as an author, she had the extremest diffidence in her own abilities.

*Mrs. Inchbald to John Murray.*

"The more I reflect on the importance of the contributions intended for this work, the more I am convinced of my own inability to become a contributor. The productions in question must, I am convinced, be of a certain quality that will demand far more acquaintance with books, and much more general knowledge, than it has ever been my good fortune to attain. Under these circumstances, finding myself, upon mature consideration, wholly inadequate to the task proposed, I beg you will accept of this apology as a truth, and present it to Mr. Hoppner on the first

opportunity ; and assure him that it has been solely my reluctance to yield up the honour he intended me which has tempted me, for an instant, to be undecided in my reply to his overture.—I am, Sir, with sincere acknowledgments for the politeness of your letter to me,

“ E. INCHBALD.”

And here the correspondence dropped.

Mr. Pillans, then a Master at Eton, and afterwards Rector of the Edinburgh High School, offered to contribute an article on Pitt and Warton's ‘Virgil.’ It was forwarded and put in type. Mr. Gifford did not think it “quite correct,” but the corrections, he added, might be made “in the proofs.”

Another important contributor was Dr. Thomas Young, whom Brougham had so unjustly cut up in the *Edinburgh*.

“I am unwilling,” he wrote to Mr. Murray, “to give up the idea of doing something for your first number. I have therefore determined to prepare you a few pages on a late work of Laplace, the supplement to his ‘*Mécanique Céleste*.’ This work would have been my first choice, as nothing can be better calculated for the purpose, but for the extreme difficulty of keeping my own speculations out of the question, and of avoiding too open a declaration of my being the author. I shall, however, hope to attain both these ends, and I shall beg that as little as possible may be said of my having contributed the article.”

In a subsequent letter, enclosing the article, Dr. Young writes to Mr. Murray :—“I hope you will not compare me with Balaam, of asinine memory, who was sent to curse the people of Israel, and then blessed them three times ; but perhaps what I have written will produce a better effect than if I had been more severe.” Gifford, on enclosing the corrected proofs of the article to Murray, said, “I trust Dr. Young will prove to be a powerful combatant for us. . . I have enlisted to-day a recruit in Finance ! Be active and secret.”

It is now difficult to understand the profound secrecy with which the projection of the new Review was carried on until within a fortnight of the day of its publication. In these modern times widespread advertisements announce the advent of a new periodical, whereas then both publisher and editor enjoined the utmost secrecy upon all with whom they were in correspondence. Still, the day of publication was very near, when the *Quarterly* was, according to Scott, to "burst like a bomb" among the Whigs of Edinburgh. The only explanation of the secrecy of the preliminary arrangements is that probably down to the last it was difficult to ascertain whether enough materials could be accumulated to form a sufficiently good number before the first *Quarterly Review* was launched into the world.

## CHAPTER VI.

GEORGE ELLIS AND WILLIAM GIFFORD.

HAVING thus described the preliminary steps taken by Murray, Scott, and Gifford, with a view to the issue of the first number of the *Quarterly*, it may not be uninteresting to our readers if we digress for a moment to give some account of two men who played a leading part in the foundation of the *Review*; who were for many years intimately associated with Mr. Murray in his principal literary undertakings, and whose names occur very frequently in the following pages.

George Ellis, prominent in his own day both as an author and a politician, but whose name is now remembered mainly by scholars, was the son of a wealthy West Indian proprietor, and was born in 1753.

As early as 1777 he published, anonymously, 'Poetical Tales by Sir Gregory Gander,' which were commended by Horace Walpole. He subsequently became a contributor to the *Rolliad*, and is believed to have been the author of some severe verses on Pitt, beginning, "Pert without fire, without experience sage," which appeared therein.

Ellis was appointed to accompany Sir James Harris (afterwards Lord Malmesbury) on his mission to the Hague in 1784, and in 1790 to the Conference at Lille. He thus acquired experience in foreign and home politics, and was, in 1796, elected M.P. for Seaford. Before this time he had

become intimately acquainted with George Canning, in conjunction with whom he assisted in starting the *Anti-Jacobin*.

His 'Specimens of Early English Poetry,' published in 1790, which subsequently went through six editions, attracted the attention of Walter Scott, to whom he was introduced by Richard Heber in 1801. In 1805 he published his 'Specimens of Early English Romances.'

His acquaintance with Scott, who describes him as "the first converser I ever knew," soon ripened into a warm and lifelong friendship, as is shown by the frequent mention of his name in Lockhart's Biography. Scott dedicated to him the Fifth Canto of 'Marmion,' and he introduced Scott to George Canning.

It was in a large measure owing to the position, energy, and ability of this trio of friends that the *Quarterly* was started, and successfully conducted: whenever Mr. Canning contributed, as he not unfrequently did to the early numbers, it was through Mr. Ellis, as a rule, that the contributions were conveyed to the Editor.

Mr. Ellis himself wrote many articles, among which may be mentioned his reviews of Scott's 'Lady of the Lake,' 'Lord of the Isles,' 'Rokeby,' and 'Bridal of Triermain;' of Byron's 'Childe Harold,' 'Giaour,' and 'Corsair.' In conjunction with Mr. Canning, who at times used to go and stay with him at Sunninghill for the purpose, he contributed several important political articles, and down to the time of his death scarcely any number of the *Quarterly* appeared without one or more papers from his pen. To the last, Mr. Ellis was a friendly but severe critic to the *Review*, and on the appearance of each succeeding number it was his practice to write to Mr. Murray, pointing out in detail what was, in his opinion, good and bad in the



materials or management. Ellis died in 1815 : his epitaph was written by Canning, who sent it for Scott's revision and approval before allowing it to be adopted.

The relations of William Gifford to John Murray were such as to warrant a somewhat more extended notice of his life, for in truth he was to the young publisher much more than the Editor of the *Quarterly*, or a general literary adviser. The large number of letters, notes, and memoranda which passed between them almost daily, go to prove that for many years there was scarcely any enterprise of any moment presented to Murray on which he did not consult Gifford ; and in spite of the dilatoriness due to the Editor's ill-health and natural indolence, which at times imperilled the existence of the *Quarterly*, the mutual affection of these two men remained unshaken till Gifford's death.

The chief incidents of Gifford's early career are recorded in his admirable and most interesting Autobiography, and need only be briefly mentioned here ; but as his correspondence with Cookesley, his friend and early patron (carefully preserved by him, in spite of his general practice of destroying all letters in his possession), has never been published, and affords a glimpse of his existence at Oxford, we may be pardoned for dwelling on this portion of his life with somewhat more detail.

Gifford was born at Ashburton, Devon, in 1757. His parents were very poor, and his father was a sort of "ne'er-do-weel." What money he earned was wasted on drink, and the mother had the utmost difficulty in bringing up her family. When eight years old the boy learnt something of the rudiments of education from a humble school-mistress ; but one day, while attempting to clamber up a little table, he fell backward and drew it after him. The

edge of the table fell upon his breast and hurt him fearfully; indeed, he never recovered from the effects of the blow. His growth was stopped, and he became partially deformed. Asthma was one of the permanent effects of the injury, and affected him nearly all his life.

In 1770 Gifford and a little brother, then but two years old, were left as orphans to the tender mercies of a man named Carlile, William's godfather, who neglected and illtreated the children.

Finding that William was too weak and delicate for hard manual labour, Carlile put the boy on board one of the coasting vessels at Brixham with a view to his becoming a sailor. Gifford continued to serve as ship-boy on *The Two Brothers* for nearly a twelvemonth. He thus became acquainted with nautical terms, and acquired a love for the sea which lasted till the close of his life.

While at Brixham, the future editor of the *Quarterly* used to be seen among the fish-wives, running about the beach in a ragged jacket and trousers. The women who travelled to Ashburton to sell their fish told this to the townspeople, and a cry of "shame" arose against Carlile, who had seized all the little means of Gifford and his brother. Carlile then recalled the elder boy from Brixham, and put him to school at the age of fourteen.

Gifford had already shown a fondness for arithmetic, and his progress was so rapid that in a few months he was at the head of his class and was able to assist his master. He now hoped to be able to maintain himself as his regular assistant and by undertaking the instruction of a few evening scholars. On reaching his fifteenth year he told his little plans of improvement to Carlile, but this heartless fellow swept them away at a blow. He took the boy from school and bound him apprentice for seven years to his

cousin, an Ashburton shoemaker. His new master was an arrogant and conceited Presbyterian—an intolerable bigot and a heartless tyrant. Gifford hated his new trade with a perfect hatred, and was gradually sinking into the condition of family drudge.

At last his mind began to awake; though he had few means of improvement, he made the most of what he had. A treatise on algebra had been given him by a young woman, who had found it in a lodging-house. This he considered as a treasure, and he was enabled to study it by means of 'Fenning's Introduction,' which he found hid away among the books of his master's son. The way in which he was enabled to produce algebraic signs was remarkable. Being deprived by his hard master of pen, ink, and paper, he beat out pieces of leather as smooth as possible, and worked out his problems on them with a blunted awl. For the rest, his memory was tenacious, and he could multiply and divide by mental recollection.

He had not begun his literary culture as yet. When a boy he had read the Bible left to him by his mother, together with her 'Imitatio Christi,' and a few odd numbers of magazines. But now, while a shoemaker's apprentice, he made his first literary effort in the composition of verses, by the recitation of which he was enabled to earn a few pence, and thereby to purchase the means of pursuing his studies.

In this obscure condition he was taken up and befriended by one of Nature's gentlemen. Mr. William Cookesley, a country surgeon, had heard of the hard fate of young Gifford, and desired to make his acquaintance. Gifford told the good man the whole history of his life: his struggles, his sufferings, his difficulties, and aspirations. "His first care," said Gifford afterwards, "was to console ;

his second, which he cherished to the last moment of his existence, was to relieve and support me." Gifford's tale so touched the heart of the surgeon, that he proceeded to get up a subscription for the purpose of "purchasing the remainder of the time of William Gifford, and for enabling him to improve himself in writing and English grammar."

Gifford was now in the twentieth year of his age, and he had eighteen months yet to serve ; but by strenuous efforts enough money was obtained, and Gifford was eventually bought off from his apprenticeship, and sent for tuition under the care of the Rev. Thomas Smerdon. There he assiduously studied English, writing, and other branches, for about three months ; and when the means for his support were exhausted, Mr. Cookesley—whom Gifford always spoke of as "his father and friend"—again helped him, and enough was contributed to maintain him at school for another year.

During this time he made considerable progress in his studies, and as his preceptor spoke favourably and confidently of his improvement, Mr. Cookesley had little difficulty in persuading his patrons to renew their donations. At length, in two years and two months from the day of his emancipation from the shoemaker's shop, Gifford was pronounced by his teacher, the Rev. Mr. Smerdon, to be fit for the University.

What was to be done now ? It had been intended that Gifford should open a writing school, but that plan having been given up, Mr. Cookesley proceeded with his efforts to obtain some employment for him. He looked round for some one who had interest enough to procure for his *protégé* some office at Oxford. This friend was eventually found in Thomas Taylor, of Denbury, a gentleman to whom Gifford had already been indebted for much kind and liberal support. The situation Mr. Taylor secured for him

was that of Bible Reader for Exeter College. Gifford proceeded thither in February 1779. His first act on reaching Oxford was to heartily thank his friend Cookesley for all that he had done for him. Cookesley replied as follows :—

“Though I have ever highly esteemed you, my dear Gifford, yet I was far from perceiving the extent of my regard for you till you left Ashburton ; and I am only reconciled to the loss of your society by the prospects of advantage and honour which are now before you. Believe me, I shall ever feel myself as much interested in your future fortune as if you were my brother or my son. Your merit, indeed, hath not been known to me alone, nor was mine the only eye that was moistened at your departure. The family, to whom you had rendered yourself dear by cohabitation and kind offices, have sincerely mourned your loss, and expressed their kind regards for you in a way that fascinated me, and the string of sympathy within me was so tenderly touched, that had I not quitted them I had been a mere baby. Mrs. Earle was ten times worse. About an hour after your departure she positively declared that your great box was nothing else but your coffin ! I esteem her for her feeling, and am confident that those tender feelings of humanity are the mark, if not always of a good heart, at least of a generous one. . . . You may tell me somewhat of Bath and Oxford if you please, but if you do not I shall not be angry, provided you inform me that you are happy and well received. As I told you, if you want my assistance, command it ; and if your money is inadequate to your expenditure, you may draw a bill on me for a few pounds twenty days after date, and I will duly honour it.”

A long correspondence ensued between Gifford and Cookesley, which the former sacredly preserved.

“I feel myself peculiarly happy,” said Cookesley, “in the good opinion you entertain of my friendship, and I want but the power of giving you more efficacious proofs of it. Independent of the regard I bear your merit, I cannot but consider myself as (I had almost said) the

entire cause of all that hath been done for you ; and therefore, in the character of my adopted, dutiful, and affectionate child, you stand entitled to my best assistance on all occasions. Herein I am influenced both by duty and by inclination. Whilst a little remains, of that little you surely shall not want. I have given Mr. Earle [with whom Gifford had lodged] £10, in part of his bill, with which he is well pleased. As I presume this will give you satisfaction I have mentioned it, but insist upon your making no fuss nor 'to do' about it. Jack can very conveniently forbear till the spring for the residue of the balance."

In the same letter, Mr. Cookesley reminded Gifford of the corrected "Pastorals," and his new poems, which he proposed should be printed and subscribed for amongst his friends. Gifford proceeded with the work, and insisted that Mr. Cookesley's name should stand at the head of the list of subscribers. "I will suck my fingers for a month rather than draw my pen to put a name over yours in my subscription book. Therefore, look to it ! I am Wilful and Wishful ; and Wilful will do it."

Many of the letters are about money. The contributions for maintaining Gifford at college were always in arrear, though Cookesley's was generally in advance.

"'Tis unlucky," said Cookesley, "that you should have been so ill-provided for the various demands of the college duns—a set of impertinent rascals, not to suffer an innocent youth to breathe one day within their walls till they aim at his very vitals. Had I conceived it possible for your stock of money to be so suddenly exhausted (though I had left myself penniless) you should not have quitted Ashburton without a more plentiful supply."

Mr. Cookesley was by no means a rich man. Indeed, like most country surgeons, he worked hard for very little pay. Yet he was always ready with a share of his earnings for the still poorer Gifford. He often wrote his letters

between sleeping and waking. One day he gives, as an excuse for the shortness of his letter :—

“ I am quite fatigued, having been without sleep for a great part of the past night, and on horseback for several hours to-day. . . . Your account of the meadows of Christ Church, where you express a wish for my being with you, almost made me so far forget myself as to cry out, ‘ I am resolved forthwith to set out for Oxford,’ but, alas ! to begin one’s journey without money would be rather worse than ending it so. Nothing but my family keeps me from flying to you. Every day affords me fresh reasons for despising this wretched place, from which I most earnestly pray to be released.”

Nevertheless, Mr. Cookesley continued to live at Ashburton, and, to encourage Gifford with his advice and assistance, he was perfectly indefatigable in endeavouring to obtain the means of keeping him at College. He obtained renewed contributions from his friends, though in the meantime Gifford occasionally suffered from want ; and he circulated Gifford’s poems, and obtained help from many persons outside Ashburton. Gifford was correspondingly grateful. When Cookesley lost a favourite child, Gifford wrote an elegy, which was greatly admired, and caused the parents’ tears to burst forth afresh. Mrs. Cookesley, as a token of regard, sent Gifford “ a ring, in memory of the dear child.”

While under the tuition of Mr. Smerdon, Gifford had translated the ‘ Tenth Satire ’ of Juvenal for a holiday task. He now contemplated translating the remaining Satires with a view to their publication, but for this purpose he wanted a copy of the volume in which they were printed. He had no money with which to buy the book, and wrote to his benefactor on the subject.

Mr. Cookesley was one day dining with Governor Palk,

near Ashburton, when he told him that on account of the arrears of the subscription for Gifford he could not yet afford to buy the book, though a second-hand copy had been offered him for sixteen shillings. The Governor then exclaimed, "Oh, dear! He shall not want a Juvenal! My dear" (to his wife), "give Mr. Cookesley a guinea, and tell Gifford from me that he shall have his Juvenal, and a little firing to read it by; and tell him, moreover, that I'll make my subscription three guineas annually. Oh, yes, he must have his Juvenal!"

Besides studying Greek and Latin, Gifford learnt French and Spanish while at Oxford. He went through Molière's plays twice and Voltaire's works once. Cookesley sent him a number of French books to read; in fact, made him a present of them. "I am exceedingly happy," wrote Cookesley to Gifford, in June 1780, "to learn by Mr. Ireland of your well-doing. Indeed, I receive fresh satisfaction each time I hear of you, and begin to grow mighty proud of the honour of patronizing a man whose great merit, gratitude, and prudence more than repay everything that can be bestowed upon him." Gifford was then proceeding with his translation of the 'Satires' of Juvenal, and a correspondence took place between him and Cookesley as to their publication by subscription.

But the noble and self-sacrificing Cookesley was not to know the success of his efforts on behalf of his young *protégé*. In the pursuit of his profession as a country surgeon he caught a severe cold in January 1781, which ended in his death. The intelligence was communicated to Gifford by Mr. Savery.

"Our poor dear friend," he said, "was in perfect health and in his usual high spirits. On Wednesday morning he had a very cold ride to Withycombe, from which he returned



with rheumatic complaints in his head and limbs. These hung about him, with some fever, for several days. His mind became much agitated. Dr. Birdwood said his disease was not so dangerous in itself, but that his own fears would destroy him. For he conceived himself to be in danger, and his distress of mind, on account of his family, deprived him totally of his reason. He had no sleep for eight days. At last convulsions seized him; he continued in a dying state till two o'clock on Sunday morning, when the dearest and most beloved of all my friends yielded up his spirit to God who gave it. I saw him in his expiring agonies about an hour and a half before he died. I kissed his dear face, and bathed his cold hands with the tears of friendship. Oh, Gifford! how insensible we are to the blessings of Providence until we lose them! Poor Mrs. Cookesley bears up as well as can be expected. I trust there will be money enough to discharge the debts, but of this I will write to you another time. God will, I trust, raise up many friends for the unhappy family; for myself, I will only say to *you*, that I should ill deserve to be called a friend to Cookesley if I now omit showing every friendship and giving every assistance to his family in my power. Now, Gifford, I offer you my hearty and sincere friendship. If you cannot find a more proper person, I will undertake your affairs, and receive your subscriptions, and promote your interest by every means we can devise. I will supply your wants as far as I can, and when you think of revisiting Ashburton you shall be as welcome to me as a brother."

In a following letter Mr. Savery informed Gifford that Cookesley had advanced for him between £20 and £30 more than he had received in subscriptions, and that he hoped that he would now proceed with his *Juvenal*, so that further subscriptions might be obtained. He added—

"With respect to your pecuniary wants, I expect you to use no reserve with me, as I shall always be happy when I can supply them. I wish I could altogether prevent them. I am subject to these kind of wants myself, but I hope I shall always be able to assist you, and that you will in a few years be above the want of assistance of any kind."

It was with inexpressible regret and distress that Gifford heard of the death of his benefactor, whose friendship had, indeed, continued unbroken until the end of his life. "He died," said Gifford, "with a letter of mine unopened in his hand." Gifford was not, however, to remain alone and unbefriended, as a new benefactor soon came to take the place of the one he had lost. Gifford had thus been enabled, by his generous friends' help, to pass through several years of conscientious study at Exeter College, where he completed the entire translation of the 'Satires' of Juvenal. His subsequent career as an author, until he assumed the editorship of the *Quarterly*, comprising as it did his attack on the Della Cruscan School of Poetry, a clique of Poetasters, including Mrs. Piozzi, Bertie Greathead, and Robert Merry, whom he demolished in the 'Baviad' and 'Mæviad,' two brilliant Satires in imitation of 'Persius' and 'Horace,' is already well-known. The following letter, however, addressed to him by Cobbett, will be read with interest:—

*Mr. Wm. Cobbett to Mr. Gifford.*

SIR,

Philadelphia, October 29th, 1797.

I am this day honoured with your valuable present, the 'Baviad' and 'Mæviad,' and lose not a moment to make you my acknowledgments for it. By a pile of papers, which I shall do myself the honour to forward you by the first vessel going from here to London, you will perceive that two of your small pieces had graced my *Gazette* previous to the receipt of the 'Baviad' and 'Mæviad'; and, after the high opinion which they had given me of the genius and taste of the author, nothing could have pleased me more than to learn that my honest endeavours had met with his approbation.

As *Merry* appears to be one of your favourite heroes, it may, perhaps, be agreeable to you to be informed of his fate in this country. I believe you know that he came hither all in a flame of patriotism. This was soon cooled. This

is a very fine country for cooling a British patriot. But before the heat had quite gone off him, he published his 'Pains of Memory,' which, though well larded with yawning interpolations about the "God-like Washington," and "free Columbia," and "land of promise rising beyond the Western Main," and many other republican abominations, notwithstanding all this, and as much *puffing* as would serve to drive a Flanders windmill, the 'Pains of Memory' are to this day severely experienced by several of my brother booksellers, unfortunately for whom there are here no pastrycook shops, as there are in London.

Anna Matilda went on the stage ; \* but this is so poor a trade here now, that I am assured it is with the utmost difficulty they can live. The players are a set of strollers ; and Merry is the *Ragotin* of the company. He is now as completely unknown here as if he lived under Matilda's petticoats.

The only production of the Della Cruscan's pen, since his emigration, you will receive enclosed ; and from it you will see his genius is not on the rise. It must, however, be confessed that this is no climate for poetry. The bathos is so entirely adapted to the bias and the powers of the American mind, that no one ever aspires even to what you call *doggerel*. The first vessel that sails direct from here to London shall carry you some proofs of what I have been here asserting.

Mr. Wright tells me he is about to publish your translation of Juvenal. May I venture to beg a copy at your hands, Sir ; and also of such other works as you have published ? Be assured, that I think myself highly honoured by your present, and particularly when I look upon it as a testimony of my having merited the applause of a gentleman of genius and a true Englishman.

I am, Sir, your very devoted Servant,

WM. COBBETT.†

\* In 1791 Merry married Miss Brunton, a celebrated actress, and in 1796 she accompanied her husband to America.

† Cobbett returned to England and started the *Porcupine*, in which he took the part of Mr. Pitt. He went to America again, and brought home the bones of Tom Paine, the quondam Quaker and Atheist ; for which the *Times* called him "the ruffian bone-grubber." Cobbett was

The *Anti-Jacobin* was started by Canning and his friends in 1797, and Gifford was eventually appointed the editor. Its principal importance, so far as Gifford was concerned, was, that it brought him into connection with Canning, Frere, and others, and secured for him their friendship. After the termination of the *Anti-Jacobin*, he proceeded with the completion of his translation of the 'Satires' of Juvenal, which he finished and published in 1802. Sir Walter Scott pronounced it to be the best poetical version of a classic in the English language. In 1805, Gifford edited and published an admirable edition of the plays of Massinger; and was proceeding with the works of the other old English dramatists, when he was selected, chiefly at the instance of Canning, as editor of the *Quarterly Review*; and the exercise of his functions in this important position for many years absorbed nearly the whole of his literary energies.

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himself very good at nicknames. He did not spare his former friend Gifford and his associates, but denominated them "the dottrel-headed old shuffle-breeches of the *Quarterly Review*!"

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE 'QUARTERLY' LAUNCHED.

WHILE Mr. Gifford was marshalling his forces and preparing for the issue of the first number of the *Quarterly*, Mr. Murray was corresponding with James Ballantyne of Edinburgh as to the works they were jointly engaged in bringing out, and also with respect to the northern agency of the new *Review*. An arrangement was made between them that they should meet at Boroughbridge, in Yorkshire, at the beginning of January 1809, for the purpose of concocting their plans. Ballantyne proposed to leave Edinburgh on the 5th of January, and Murray was to set out from London on the same day, both making for Boroughbridge. A few days before Ballantyne left Edinburgh he wrote to Murray :—

“I shall not let a living soul know of my intended journey. Entire secrecy seems necessary at present. I dined yesterday *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Scott, and had a great deal of highly important conversation with him. He showed me a letter bidding a final farewell to the house of Constable.”

It was mid-winter, and there were increasing indications of a heavy storm brewing. Notwithstanding the severity of the weather, however, both determined to set out for their place of meeting in Yorkshire. Two days before Ballantyne left Edinburgh, he wrote as follows :—

*Mr. Ballantyne to John Murray.*

Jan. 4th, 1809.

DEAR MURRAY,

It is blowing the devil's weather here ; but no matter—if the mail goes, I go. I shall travel by the mail, and shall, instantly on arriving, go to the 'Crown,' hoping to find you and an imperial dinner. By the bye, you had better, on your arrival, take places north and south for the following day. In four or five hours after your receiving this, I expect to shake your princely paw.

Thine, J. B.

Scott wrote at the same time—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Castle St., Jan. 4th, 1809.

MY DEAR SIR,

I trouble you with a few lines to say that I will have my articles ready to send off to Mr. Gifford early next week. I have been strangely interrupted, first by my duty as Clerk to a Commission now sitting for reform of our Courts, and since by a very bad cold. Mrs. Scott sends you her kindest thanks for 'Marmion Pocket Book.'

Ballantyne, who takes charge of this note, sets off to-day to meet you. We talked over a great number of plans or hints of plans together, and I am positively certain enough may be done in various ways to make him hold up his character with any Edinburgh publisher. Constable and I are quite broken, owing to Mr. Hunter's extreme incivility, to which I will certainly never subject myself more. It seems uncertain whether even the 'Swift' proceeds, but this I will bring to a point. I shall be most anxious to see the *Review*. It is publicly talked of here, though by some confounded with Cumberland's attempt. Constable mentioned the report to me and asked me if it was to be an Edinburgh publication. I told him report said "no."

I fear this snow will render your journey rather unpleasant, but hope Ballantyne will get through notwithstanding. Believe me, my dear Sir,

Yours truly,  
W. SCOTT.

The weather, however, interfered with the meeting. It was snowing in Edinburgh, and snowing in London. Murray travelled northward by the mail, but although the coach was drawn by six horses all the way, he was only able to reach Doncaster by the time that he should have been at Boroughbridge. In many places the labourers were at work shovelling away the snow and clearing out the roads. Early on the following morning, Murray pushed on from Doncaster. Ballantyne had experienced even severer weather; the snow-drifts along the Border had seriously interrupted the progress of the mail, and two days elapsed before he could meet his friend at the 'Crown.' At length they met, enjoyed their imperial dinner, and after transacting their important business they departed, one for Edinburgh, the other for London.

Ballantyne, on reaching Edinburgh, wrote :—

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

Jan. 11th, 1809.

I got home last night shrivelled with the cold like an autumn leaf, but sound in wind and limb. I have seen and talked over all our matters with *our friend* (Scott), and had the happiness to find that his confidence in us both is even increased by the coherence of our views in all particulars. . . . During our conversation I impressed him as strongly as I could respecting the importance of the first number of the *Review*, and found him as energetic and warm as yourself could wish. He even said that such was his sense of the duty which he had himself undertaken, that he wrote his articles with a degree of anxiety and care, which he fears may rather have injured than aided their effect. He complains much of the difficulty he found in getting those who had engaged to write to fulfil their engagement; but seems to regard this as necessarily attending every new plan. On the whole, he thinks your commencement is likely to be auspicious, and your progress great. Whether there is any hope that he may be in town in time to be useful to your

first number I greatly doubt. He is over head and ears—not in politics, history, or poetry, but in figures and calculations! This is in consequence of his new employment as Clerk to the Commission of Parliament for reforming the Scotch Courts, which for the present almost entirely engrosses him. Were his facility of composition less, or his industry, he might fairly say that he had no time for other duties.

Most truly and faithfully yours,  
J. B.

The Ballantynes were appointed publishers of the new *Review* in Edinburgh, and, with a view to a more central position, they proceeded to take premises in South Hanover Street.† Scott wrote with reference to this :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Feb. 1809.

I enclose the promised 'Swift,' and am now, I think, personally out of your debt, though I will endeavour to stop up gaps if I do not receive the contributions I expect from others. Were I in the neighbourhood of your shop in London I could soon run up half a sheet of trifling articles with a page or two to each, but that is impossible here for lack of materials.

When the Ballantynes open shop you must take care to have them supplied with food for such a stop-gap sort of criticism. I think we will never again feel the pressure we have had for this number; the harvest has literally been great and the labourers few.

Yours truly,  
W. S.

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

January 27th, 1809.

"I see or hear of nothing but good about the *Review*. Mr. Scott is at this moment busy with two articles, besides the one he has sent. In conversation a few days since, I heard a gentleman ask him, 'Pray, sir, do you think the *Quarterly Review* will be equal to the *Edinburgh*?' His answer was, 'I won't be quite sure of the first number,



because of course there are difficulties attending the commencement of every work which time and habit can alone smooth away. But I think the first number will be a good one, and in the course of three or four, *I think we'll sweat them !*”

The first number of the *Quarterly Review* was published at the end of February, 1809. Like most first numbers, it did not entirely realize the sanguine views of its promoters. It did not burst like a thunder-clap on the reading public; nor did it give promise to its friends that a new political power had been born into the world. The general tone was more literary than political; and though it contained much that was well worth reading, none of its articles were of first-rate quality.

Walter Scott was the principal contributor, and was keenly interested in its progress, though his mind was ever teeming with other new schemes. The allusion in the following letter to his publication of “many unauthenticated books,” if unintentional, seems little less than prophetic.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, Feb. 25th, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

I see with pleasure that you will be out on the first. Yet I wish I could have seen my articles in proof, for I seldom read over my things in manuscript, and always find infinite room for improvement at the printer's expense. I hope our hurry will not be such another time as to deprive me of the chance of doing the best I can, which depends greatly on my seeing the proofs. Pray have the goodness to attend to this.

I have made for the Ballantynes a little selection of poetry, to be entitled ‘English Minstrelsy;’ I also intend to arrange for them a first volume of English Memoirs, to be entitled—

‘Secret History of the Court of James I.’

To consist of

Osborne's 'Traditional Memoirs.'

Sir Anthony Welldon's 'Court and Character of James I.'

Heylin's 'Aulicus Coquinariae.'

Sir Edward Peyton's 'Rise and Fall of the House of Stewart.'

I will add a few explanatory notes to these curious memoirs, and hope to continue the collection, as (thanks to my constant labour on 'Somers') it costs me no expense, and shall cost the proprietors none. You may advertise the publications, and Ballantyne, equally agreeable to his own wish and mine, will let you choose your own share in them. I have a commission for you in the way of art. I have published many unauthenticated books, as you know, and may probably bring forward many more. Now I wish to have it in my power to place on a few copies of each a decisive mark of appropriation. I have chosen for this purpose a device borne by a champion of my name in a tournament at Stirling! It was a gate and portcullis, with the motto *CLAUSUS TUTUS ERO*. I have it engraved on a seal, as you may remark on the enclosure, but it is done in a most blackguard style. Now what I want is to have this same gateway and this same portcullis and this same motto of *clausus tutus ero*, which is an anagram of *Walterus Scotus* (taking two single *U*'s for the *IV*), cut upon wood in the most elegant manner, so as to make a small vignette capable of being applied to a few copies of every work which I either write or publish. This fancy of making *portcullis* copies I have much at heart, and trust to you to get it accomplished for me in the most elegant manner. I don't mind the expense, and perhaps Mr. Westall might be disposed to make a sketch for me.

I am most anxious to see the *Review*. God grant we may lose no ground; I tremble when I think of my own articles, of two of which I have but an indefinite recollection.

What would you think of an edition of the 'Old English Froissart,' say 500 in the small *antique quarto*, a beautiful size of book; the spelling must be brought to an uniformity, the work copied (as I could not promise my beautiful copy to go to press), notes added and illustrations, &c., and inaccuracies corrected. I think Johnes would be

driven into most deserved disgrace, and I can get the use of a most curious MS. of the French Froissart in the Newbattle Library, probably the finest in existence after that of Berlin. I am an enthusiast about Berners' Froissart, and though I could not undertake the drudgery of preparing the whole for the press, yet Weber\* would do it under my eye upon the most reasonable terms. I would revise every part relating to English history.

I have several other literary schemes, but defer mentioning them till I come to London, which I sincerely hope will be in the course of a month or six weeks. I hear Mr. Canning is anxious about our *Review*. Constable says it is a Scotch job. I could not help quizzing Mr. Robert Miller, who asked me in an odd sort of way, as I thought, why it was not out? I said very indifferently I knew nothing about it, but heard a vague report that the Edition was to be much enlarged on account of the expected demand. I also inclose a few lines to my brother, and am, dear Sir,

Very truly yours,  
W. SCOTT.

It is universally agreed here that Cumberland is five hundred degrees beneath contempt.

Ballantyne, Scott's partner, and publisher of the *Review* in Edinburgh, hastened to communicate to Murray their joint views as to the success of the work.

*Mr. Ballantyne to John Murray.*

February 28th, 1809.

MY DEAR MURRAY,

I received the *Quarterly* an hour ago. Before taking it to Mr. Scott, I had just time to look into the article on Burns, and at the general aspect of the book. It looks uncommonly well. . . . The view of Burns' character is better than Jeffrey's. It is written in a more congenial tone, with more tender, kindly feeling. Though not perhaps written with such elaborate eloquence as Jeffrey's, the thoughts are more original, and the style equally

\* Henry Weber, Scott's amanuensis.

powerful. The two first articles (and perhaps the rest are not inferior) will confer a name on the *Review*. But why do I trouble you with *my* opinions, when I can give you Mr. Scott's? He has just been reading the Spanish article beside me, and he again and again interrupted himself with expressions of the strongest admiration.

Three days later, Ballantyne again wrote :—

"I have now read 'Spain,' 'Burns,' 'Woman,' 'Curran,' 'Cid,' 'Carr,' 'Missionaries.' Upon the whole, I think these articles most excellent. Mr. Scott is in high spirits; but he says there are evident marks of haste in most of them. With respect to his own articles, he much regrets not to have had the opportunity of revising them. He thinks the 'Missionaries' very clever; but he shakes his head at 'Sidney,' 'Woman,' and 'Public Characters.' Our copies, which we expected this morning, have not made their appearance, which has given us no small anxiety. We are panting to hear the public voice. Depend upon it, *if* our exertions are continued, the thing will do. Would G. were as active as Scott and Murray!"

Murray had plenty of advisers. Gifford said he had too many. His friend, Sharon Turner, was ready with his criticism on No. 1. He deplored the appearance of the article by Scott on "Carr's Tour in Scotland."\*

*Mr. Sharon Turner to John Murray.*

"I cannot endure the idea of an individual being wounded merely because he has written a book. If, as in the case of the authors attacked in the 'Baviad,' the works censured were vitiating our literature—or, as in the case of Moore's Poems, corrupting our morals—if they were denouncing our religious principles, or attacking those political principles on which our Government subsists—let them be criticised without mercy. The *salus publica*

\* Scott himself had written to Murray about this, which he calls "a whisky-frisky article," on June 30. "I take the advantage of forwarding Sir John's *Review*, to send you back his letters under the same cover. He is an incomparable goose, but as he is innocent and good-natured, I would not like it to be publicly known that the flagellation comes from my hand. Secrecy therefore will oblige me."

demands the sacrifice. But to make an individual ridiculous merely because he has written a foolish, if it be a harmless book, is not, I think, justifiable on any moral principle. . . . I repeat my principle. Whatever tends to vitiate our literary taste, our morals, our religious or political principles, may be fairly at the mercy of criticism. So, whatever tends to introduce false science, false history, indeed, falsehood in any shape, exposes itself to the censor's rod. But harmless, inoffensive works should be passed by. Where is the bravery of treading on a worm or crushing a poor fly? Where the utility? Where the honour?"

On the 28th of February Murray wrote to Ballantyne:—

"I have sent you 100 of the *Quarterly Review* by the mail, and 100 by the stage coach from White Horse, Fetter Lane. I intend to undergo the expense myself. To be sold to the trade precisely as the *Edinburgh Review* is sold."

The supply was not sufficient. "All the 200 *Reviews*," wrote Ballantyne, "except 25 were sold within two hours after the shop was opened;" 200 more copies were sent on the 4th of March; 50 on the 7th; 200 on the 18th; 100 on the 22nd; and 100 on the 29th—in all, 850 copies; 4000 copies had been printed at first; the edition was soon exhausted; and a second edition was called for. Murray wrote to Ballantyne:—

"Although I am considerably out of pocket by the adventure at present, yet I hope that in the course of next year it will at least pay its expenses."

Mr. Scott was ample in his encouragements.

"I think," he wrote to Murray, "a firm and stable sale will be settled here, to the extent of 1000 or 1500 even for the next number. . . . I am quite pleased with my ten guineas a sheet for my labour in writing, and for additional exertions. I will consider them as overpaid by success in the cause, especially while that success is doubtful."

At the same time Scott wrote a long letter to Gifford,

of which the following sentence may be taken as a sample :—

“I will lay down my head in despair if this well-laid scheme is defeated by our own want of exertion. But I have no fear of it. I was never in my life subject to impressions of that nature ; and in this case I will fight upon my stumps, like Widderington, and *to* the stumps, both of my pen and my sword, if need be.”

To Mr. Murray he wrote :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, March 7th, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

I safely received your letters for Erskine and myself covering the very handsome recompense of our labours, and also the new poem, and “John de Lancastre.” You need not fear my being courteous with such a veteran as Cumberland, though he has given me some provocation to use him harshly. General Report here is favourable to us, so far as it has reached my ear ; and if the next number be what I anticipate with pleasure, there is no fear of us. I hope to get at least three capital articles here besides smaller things, and my own lucubrations. The copies sent to Hanover Street have made a very speedy retreat. I am anxiously expecting a summons to London because I hope to be of some use there, and we will talk over all our other plans. I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly,  
WALTER SCOTT.

Ballantyne wrote to Murray in March :—

“Constable, I am told, has consulted Sir Samuel Romilly, and means, after writing a book against me, to prosecute me for *stealing his plans* ! Somebody has certainly stolen his brains !”

The sales of the first number were not sufficiently large to remove Mr. Murray’s anxiety for the future, and on March 13 we find James Ballantyne writing to encourage him.

“You will be pleased to hear that Mr. Scott pronounces your letter \* to be one of the most excellent and judicious he ever read. Indeed, Murray, so it is, a most capital letter. Fear nothing, my dear Murray, stout hearts and clear heads are united with you in a noble cause, and IT WILL TRIUMPH!”

Scott also alludes to the same subject in the following—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, March 19th, 1809.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have your long and interesting letter. To me, who am acquainted with bookselling phrase, it is needless to say that a steady and respectable sale is just better than no sale at all. Here we have been more fortunate. Ballantyne has only about 30 left out of the last 200 received by sea, and thinks he could easily have sold double the number forwarded. Many announced themselves as steady customers, and I have no doubt you may sell 1000 in Scotland quarterly. B. has never had his parcel two days on his hands.

I have written a long and most pressing letter to Mr. Gifford, which I hope may have some effect. I see the faults you point out, but hardly know how to prevent them at this distance. I think you had better call on the Lord Advocate as from yourself, and state the necessity of my coming to town. I mention this because it is in his power to hasten my journey thither on some public business which may otherwise lie over for months; this, however, you need not hint to him, but barely state your regret that I have written to you dubiously on the subject of coming up, and the advantage my doing so would be to the *Review*. To me it is quite the same thing whether I come up now, or later in the summer, but to you it may be very different, for I see matters are between the winning and losing. And, to say truth, it would be an inconvenient crusade for me to come up this month on my own expense when I am sure to be called up the next on that of the public.

I have found means to get at Mr. G., and have procured a letter to be written to him, which may possibly produce

\* The letter here referred to has unfortunately not been preserved.

one to you signed Rutherford or Richardson, or some such name, and dated from the North of England ; or, if he does not write to you, enquiry is to be made whether he would choose you should address him. The secrecy to be observed in this business must be most profound, even to Ballantyne and all the world. If you get articles from him (which will and must draw attention) you must throw out a false scent for enquirers. I believe this unfortunate man will soon be in London.

It is very ill proposed to give Sydney Smith's sermons to Ireland, and the thing must not be. I intend to write to Mr. Gifford by post, begging them for Mr. Erskine. He and I know the man, and surely will manage the affair best.

Ballantyne gets possession of his shop in a few days. I mean he gets the workmen out of it, and enters business with the fairest auspices ; prudence and firmness on his part cannot fail to establish him in the first rate in this place.

His making a stand is most essential to the *Review*, and all our other plans for every other bookseller here has sunk under the predominating influence of Constable's house, and they literally dare not call their souls their own.

WALTER SCOTT.

In reply, Mr. Murray wrote on March 24th to Mr. Scott, urging him to come to London, and offering, "if there be no plea for charging your expenses to Government," to "undertake that the *Review* shall pay them as far as one hundred guineas." To this Scott replied—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh. March 27th, 1809.

I have only time to give a very short answer to your letter. Some very important business detains me here till Monday or Tuesday, on the last of which days at farthest I will set off for town, and will be with you of course at the end of the week. As to my travelling expenses, if Government pay me, good and well ; if they do not, depend on it I will never take a farthing from you. You have, my good friend, enough of expense to incur in forwarding this great and dubious undertaking, and God forbid I should add so



unreasonable a charge as your liberality points at. I am very frank in money matters, and always take my price when I think I can give money's worth for money, but this is quite extravagant, and you must think no more of it. Should I want money for any purpose I will readily make *you* my banker and give you value in reviews. John Ballantyne's last remittance continues to go off briskly; the devil's in you in London, you don't know good writing when you get it. All depends on our cutting in before the next *Edinburgh*, when instead of following their lead they shall follow ours.

Mrs. Scott is my fellow-traveller in virtue of an old promise.

I am, dear Sir, yours truly,  
WALTER SCOTT.

April 4th, at night.

I have been detained a day later than I intended, but set off to-morrow at mid-day. I believe I shall get *franked*, so will have my generosity for nothing. I hope to be in London on Monday.

On receiving his payment for the article on 'Medals,' Mr. Barré Charles Roberts communicated his thanks to Mr. Murray as follows:—

"I have received your draught from Mr. Gifford, and beg to return you many thanks. Were I to regard it as a reward, I could not in conscience help saying that it is far beyond my very poor deserts. But I fully enter into the very liberal and honourable motives which have regulated the principles on which the *Quarterly Review* is established."

The most constant critic of the articles published in the *Quarterly* was Mr. George Ellis. He had been connected with the enterprise from the first, and felt himself in a measure responsible for its success. Immediately on the publication of the first number, he gave Mr. Murray his opinion as to the merits of the articles. He compared the number with the last *Edinburgh*, which, he said, was "the

very best that has yet appeared." Yet his opinion of the first number of the *Quarterly* was "not discouraging." He thought that Scott's article on 'Burns's Reliques' was the best, though the other was "capital." Southey's article on the Missionaries was "uncommonly excellent." He praised Turner's Sanscrit article, as well as Dr. Young's on Laplace. "Upon the whole," he said, "I am at least tolerably satisfied; but *you* are the person to whom we must all look for the opinion of the public. I have tried to obtain a recruit in the person of Mr. Park, the editor of Bolingbroke's later letters."

In sending out copies of the first number, Mr. Murray was not forgetful of one friend who had taken a leading part in originating the *Review*.

In 1808 Mr. Stratford Canning, when only twenty years of age, had been selected to accompany Mr. Adair on a special mission to Constantinople. The following year, on Mr. Adair being appointed H. B. M. Minister to the Sublime Porte, Stratford Canning became Secretary of Legation. Mr. Murray wrote to him:—

*John Murray to Mr. Stratford Canning.*

32, Fleet St., London, March 12th, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

It is with no small degree of pleasure that I send, for the favour of your acceptance, the first number of the *Quarterly Review*, a work which owes its birth to your obliging countenance and introduction of me to Mr. Gifford. I flatter myself that upon the whole you will not be dissatisfied with our first attempt, which is universally allowed to be so very respectable. Had you been in London during its progress, it would, I am confident, have been rendered more deserving of public attention. We need, indeed, the exertion of great energy to counteract the baneful effects of the widely circulating and dangerous principles of the *E. R.* which becomes, if possible, more immoral and certainly more openly Jacobinical—and the sale of this

work has arisen to the enormous extent of *eleven thousand!*

It is unnecessary for me to inform you that your friends are the principal writers and patrons of the *Quarterly Review* and that Mr. G—— is the editor. I find that, upon comparison with the *E. R.*, we are thought to want spirit, and we require a succession of novelty to attract public attention before we shall be sufficiently read to render our counteracting arguments and principles decidedly serviceable to our cause. It will, I fear, be hoping too much to think that you have time to favour us with an article yourself during your present occupation, but if you would collect and send over foreign works of any and every kind in *any language*, if they have either importance or interest either for their literature or politics, it would very essentially oblige Mr. G——, and serve the cause, for by giving an account of books and subjects which the *E. R.* cannot have access to we shall provoke public attention, and by this means be able to insinuate and to circulate our better doctrines in Church and State. I am very willing to undergo any expense for foreign works of any kind, and I entreat the favour of you to lose no opportunity of forwarding them either by land or sea. Foreign journals, if occasionally transmitted by couriers, would be extremely valuable. I trust that you will do me the favour to pardon this intrusion respecting the *Review*, but as you have been so unquestionably instrumental to its foundation, I am very ambitious of rendering you its patron also. It will afford me infinite pleasure to hear of your health and advancement.

I shall ever be, with the highest esteem, dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

*Mr. Stratford Canning to John Murray.*

“With regard to the commission which you have given me, it is, I fear, completely out of my power to execute it. Literature neither resides at Constantinople nor passes through it. Even were I able to obtain the publications of France and Germany by way of Vienna, the road is so circuitous, that you would have them later than others who contrive to smuggle them across the North Sea. Every

London newspaper that retails its daily sixpennyworth of false reports, publishes the French, the Hamburgh, the Vienna, the Frankfort, and other journals, full as soon as we receive any of them here. This is the case at all times ; at present it is much worse. We are entirely insulated. The Russians block up the usual road through Bucharest, and the Servians prevent the passage of couriers through Bosnia. And in addition to these difficulties, the present state of the Continent must at least interrupt all literary works. You will not, I am sure, look upon these as idle excuses. Things may probably improve, and I will not quit this country without commissioning some one here to send you anything that may be of use to so promising a publication as your *Review*."

No sooner was one number published, than preparations were made for the next. Every periodical is a continuous work—never ending, still beginning. New contributors must be gained ; new books reviewed ; new views criticised. Mr. Murray was, even more than the Editor, the backbone of the enterprise: he was indefatigable in soliciting new writers for the *Quarterly*, and in finding the books fit for review, and the appropriate reviewers of the books. Sometimes the reviews were printed before the Editor was consulted, but everything passed under the notice of Gifford, and received his emendations and final approval.

Mr. Murray went so far as to invite Leigh Hunt to contribute an article on Literature or Poetry for the *Quarterly*. The reply came from John Hunt, Leigh's brother. He said :

*Mr. John Hunt to John Murray.*

"My brother some days back requested me to present to you his thanks for the polite note you favoured him with on the subject of the *Review*, to which he should have been most willing to have contributed in the manner you propose, did he not perceive that the political sentiments contained in it are in direct opposition to his own."

This was honest, though it did not interfere with the personal intercourse of the publisher and the poet. Murray afterwards wrote to Scott : " Hunt is most vilely wrong-headed in politics, which he has allowed to turn him away from the path of elegant criticism, which might have led him to eminence and respectability."

Mr. Murray, having applied to Professor Thomson of Edinburgh for an article for the *Review*, the Professor expressed his perfect willingness to write, as he approved of its sentiments and spirit. At the same time he said :

*Professor Thomson to John Murray.*

" Success, however, you will find difficult, partly because the *Edinburgh Review* has already established its reputation with the public, and partly because it is much easier to write with spirit, and to please the reader by a universal and unmerciful system of attack, than by fair, candid, and enlightened criticism. Every one is delighted to see an author cut up, but few are judges of the talents and knowledge necessary to give an honest and comprehensive view of a good work."

James Mill, author of the 'History of British India,' sent an article for the second number ; but the sentiments and principles not being in accordance with those of the Editor, it was not at once accepted. On learning this, he wrote to Mr. Murray as follows :

*Mr. James Mill to John Murray.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I can have no objection in the world to your delaying the article I have sent you till it altogether suits your arrangements to make use of it. Besides this point, a few words of explanation may not be altogether useless with regard to another. I am half inclined to suspect that the objection of your Editor goes a little farther than you state. If so, I beg you will not hesitate a moment about what you are to do with it. I wrote it solely with a view

to oblige and to benefit *you personally*, but with very little idea, as I told you at our first conversation on the subject, that it would be in my power to be of any use to you, as the views which I entertained respecting what is good for our country were very different from the views entertained by the gentlemen with whom in your projected concern you told me you were to be connected. To convince you, however, of my good-will, I am perfectly ready to give you a specimen, and if it appears to be such as likely to give offence to your friends, or not to harmonize with the general style of your work, commit it to the flames without the smallest scruple. Be assured that it will not make the smallest difference in my sentiments towards you, or render me in the smallest degree less disposed to lend you my aid (such as it is) on any other occasion when it may be better calculated to be of use to you.

Yours very truly,  
J. MILL.

Gifford was not a man of business ; he was unpunctual, and the second number of the *Quarterly* appeared behind its time. Mr. William Erskine of Edinburgh, one of the contributors to the *Quarterly*, contrasting the punctual appearance of the *Edinburgh* with the dilatoriness of its competitor, wrote to Mr. Murray: "It is a pity that your *Palinurus* is so much less vigilant and active." The publisher felt himself under the necessity of expostulating with the Editor.

*John Murray to Mr. Gifford.*

May 11th, 1809.

DEAR MR. GIFFORD,

I begin to suspect that you are not aware of the complete misery which is occasioned to me, and the certain ruin which must attend the *Review*, by our unfortunate procrastination. Long before this, every line of copy for the present number ought to have been in the hands of the printer. Yet the whole of the *Review* is yet to print. I know not what to do to facilitate your labour, for the articles which you have long had lie scattered without

attention, and those which I ventured to send to the printer undergo such retarding corrections, that even by this mode we do not advance. I entreat the favour of your exertion. For the last five months my most imperative concerns have yielded to this, without the hope of my anxiety or labour ceasing.

“Tanti miserere laboris,”

in my distress and with regret from

JOHN MURRAY.

On the following day, Mr. Murray sent the Editor an article by Mr. Sharon Turner on the ‘Character of Buonaparte,’—à propos of the campaign in Italy, and pressing for its acceptance. Mr. Gifford replied that he had given it to Mr. Canning to consider. Then he proceeded :

“The delay and confusion which have arisen must be attributed to a want of confidential communication. In a word, you have too many advisers, and I too many masters. I can easily account, and still more easily allow, for the anxiety which you feel in a cause where so much of your property is embarked, and which you will always find me most ready to benefit and advance ; but for this it will be necessary to have no reserves ; in a word, we must understand each other.”

The truth is, that the arrangements for the editing, printing, and publication of the *Quarterly* had not yet fairly settled into working order. It takes time and experience to ensure for a periodical its punctual appearance regularly on the day and at the hour announced to the public. The Editor and the publisher were perhaps both in some measure at fault. They could only look forward to greater promptitude and punctuality in the future.

At last the second number of the *Quarterly* appeared, at the end of May instead of at the middle of April. The new contributors to this number were Dr. D'Oyley, the Rev. Mr. Walpole, and George Canning, who, in conjunction

with Sharon Turner, contributed the last article on Austrian State Papers.

As soon as the second number was published, Mr. Gifford, whose health was hardly equal to the constant strain of preparing and editing the successive numbers, hastened away, as was his custom, to the seaside. He wrote to Mr. Murray from Ryde:—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

June 18th, 1809.

“I rejoice to hear of our success, and feel very anxious to carry it further. A fortnight’s complete abstraction from all sublunary cares has done me much good, and I am now ready to put on my spectacles and look about me. . . . Hoppner is here, and has been at Death’s door. The third day after his arrival, he had an apoplectic fit, from which blisters, &c., have miraculously recovered him. . . . This morning I received a letter from Mr. Erskine. He speaks very highly of the second number, and of the Austrian article, which is thought its chief attraction. Theology, he says, few people read or care about. On this, I wish to say a word seriously. I am sorry that Mr. E. has fallen into that notion, too general I fear in Scotland; but this is his own concern. I differ with him totally, however, as to the few readers which such subjects find; for as far as my knowledge reaches, the reverse is the fact. The strongest letter which I have received since I came down, in our favour, points out the two serious articles as masterly productions and of decided superiority. We have taught the truth I mention to the *Edinburgh Review*, and in their last number they have also attempted to be serious, and abstain from their flippant impiety. It is not done with the best grace, but it has done them credit, I hear. . . . When you make up your parcel, pray put in some small cheap ‘Horace,’ which I can no more do without than Parson Adams *ex* ‘Æschylus.’ I have left it somewhere on the road. Any common thing will do.”

Mr. Murray sent Gifford a splendid copy of ‘Horace’ in the next parcel of books and manuscripts. In his reply Gifford said:



"There is no end of writing, for I seem to have ten reams of things to say. Your 'Horace' I should have accepted with much more pleasure if it had not been so magnificent. Why, my dear sir, will you do those things?"

Mr. George Ellis was, as usual, ready with his criticism.

*Mr. George Ellis to John Murray.*

"I have great satisfaction in being able to say that it is, in my opinion, incomparably better than the preceding number; indeed so good that, if we take care not to degenerate, we may look forward with confidence to ultimate success. I confess that, to my taste, the long article on the New Testament is very tedious, and that the progress of Socinianism is, to my apprehension, a bugbear which *we* have no immediate reason to be scared by; but it may alarm some people, and what I think a dull prosing piece of orthodoxy may have its admirers, and promote our sale. At all events one such article will not, while there is a good deal of spirit in the rest, materially injure it. 'Amelie Mansfield' is, I think, the weakest article in the whole, but not below mediocrity. On the other hand, I think that Scott's 'Wyoming' is better than Jeffrey's, and that upon the whole we decidedly surpass the *E. R.* this time. Sydney Smith is in such a passion, that his humour is coarser than ever, and the critique upon him in our number will not, probably, allay his fury."

The Ballantynes were also loud in their praise of the new number; 750 copies in all were sent to Edinburgh. James Ballantyne wrote to Mr. Murray:

"Mr. Erskine, my brother, and myself, think it admirable. . . . The outcry here for it is very strong. My private subscribers have increased considerably; and the demand for the trade also is more general."

Constable had also a good word to say of it. In a letter to his partner, Hunter, then in London, he said:

"I received the *Quarterly Review* yesterday, and immediately went and delivered it to Mr. Jeffrey himself.

It really seems a respectable number, but what then? Unless theirs improves and ours falls off it cannot harm us, I think. I observe that Nos. 1 and 2 extend to merely twenty-nine sheets, so that, in fact, ours is still the cheaper of the two. Murray's waiting on you with it is one of the wisest things I ever knew him do: you will not be behindhand with him in civility."

No. 3 of the *Quarterly* was also late, and was not published until the end of August. The contributors were behindhand; besides, an article was expected from Canning on Spain, and the publication was postponed until this article had been received, printed and corrected. The foundations of it were laid by George Ellis, and it was completed by George Canning. Ellis was as indefatigable as ever. He had two articles in the number—one on West Indian, and the other on Spanish affairs. With respect to the latter, he wrote to Mr. Murray towards the end of August:

*Mr. George Ellis to John Murray.*

"I have had a large mass of materials to read and even to study; and I wish that Canning should see and, if necessary, correct what I have done. He wishes it also, but has suggested to me that it would be pleasanter to him to see it in print. I therefore send you what I have written. Pray get it printed, if it be possible, *immediately*, and send me down a proof by Friday's post, as he promises to be with me on Saturday."

The article was printed and sent down to Sunning Hill, near Staines, where Mr. Ellis was living at the time. It was corrected and partly rewritten by Mr. Canning, and duly appeared as the concluding article of No. 3.

In returning the corrected proof to the publisher, Mr. Ellis wrote:

*Mr. George Ellis to John Murray.*

August 21st.

"I have now the satisfaction to send you the Spanish article complete. It will prove, I believe, a great deal longer than I expected; but it will, I trust, *fully answer* all your expectations, and, I feel confident, will eclipse the merit of any article which has ever yet appeared, or is likely to appear, in the rival *Review*. You will not suppose that I speak thus of that part of it which is my own; but of the general conclusion (for which you applied to me), and which, with the exception of the first paragraph in it, is by a *master hand* . . . How soon shall we come out? and what do you think generally of the other articles in this number?"

Mr. Gifford wrote:—

"In consequence of my importunity, Mr. Canning has exerted himself and produced the best article that ever yet appeared in any *Review*."

Mr. Murray, so far as can be ascertained from his statement to Constable,\* thought the number a very bad one, while the *Edinburgh Review* was "the best they had yet published." "I told him," said Constable, "I presumed he was quizzing; he said not." Gifford, on the other hand, thought the number a very good one. There was an admirable article by Dr. Thomas Young on "Insanity," and another by the Rev. Dr. D'Oyley on "Paley," which Gifford thought was "his best." Mr. Scott was busily occupied with the second volume of the 'Minstrelsy,' as well as with the 'Lady of the Lake,' and therefore he contributed no article to the number.† The new

\* 'Archibald Constable and his Literary Correspondents,' i. 145.

† Mr. Murray, in a letter to Mrs. Murray, then at Edinburgh, on a visit to Mrs. Elliot, said (July 28th, 1809), "I have been in a sad plight all day about my *Review*. We are going on very indifferently; and a letter from William Erskine to-day informs me that Mr. Scott does not intend, he believes, to write anything for the present Number. This is vexatious, and I have been up to Gifford to ask him to write to Mr. Scott urgently."

contributors were Dr. Thomas Thomson of Edinburgh ; Dr. Whitaker, Dr. Sayers, and—a name which was to become most intimately connected with the *Quarterly*—John Wilson Croker.

Although Mr. Gifford was sometimes the subject of opprobrium because of his supposed severity, we find that in many cases he softened down the tone of the reviewers. For instance, in communicating to Mr. Murray the first part of Dr. Thomson's article on the "Outlines of Mineralogy," by Kidd, he observed :

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

"It is very splenitick and very severe, and much too wantonly so. I hope, however, it is just. Some of the opprobrious language I shall soften, for the eternal repetitions of *ignorance, absurdity, surprising*, &c., are not wanted. I am sorry to observe so much Nationality in it. Let this be a secret between us, for I will not have my private opinions go beyond yourself. As for Kidd, he is a modest, unassuming man, and is not to be attacked with sticks and stones like a savage. Remember, it is only the epithets which I mean to soften ; for as to the scientific part, it shall not be meddled with.

"As for Mr. Pillans, it is an unpleasant business ; but for these things I find we must be prepared. The fact is, that his principles in some things do not accord with those of the *Review*, and I was forced to *review* him. He is a learned and ingenious young man, but he wants penetration. To be the drudge of Arthur Young and that shallow coxcomb Pinckney, is not creditable to him. Yet I think that he may be *very* serviceable to us, and, at any rate, he is young enough to make the loss of a few hours' labour for improvement of no great consequence to him. He will write better every day, and when he can throw France and America out of his list of Paradises, and their blind admirers out of his list of Philosophers, he will make a most valuable man. As for you and me, let us remember that mutual confidence and secrecy are the keysone of success, and that an important charge rests upon us, which is worth much of our serious attention."

His faithful correspondent, Mr. Ellis, wrote as to the quality of this number of the *Quarterly*. He agreed with Mr. Murray, that though profound, it was "most notoriously and unequivocally *dull*;" that he had not been able to find any one willing to read at all the ponderous essay upon the Greek Article, or the disquisition about Gothic Architecture. Mr. Gifford, he said, was too patient and laborious; he spent too much of his time in making annotations, and attempting to elicit a rational meaning from the shapeless lumps of criticism laid before him. In fact, he said, we want wit and variety. We require a selection of spirited and playful articles, rather than those of scholarship and profundity. We must veto ponderous articles; they will simply sink us.

*Mr. Ellis to John Murray.*

"I am convinced," he added, "that we are, at present, too few; that the persons on whom we principally depend *could* not, conveniently to themselves, and therefore *would not*, undertake to fill four *Reviews* in a year. I am in great doubt whether we shall soon produce a number containing as much *intrinsic solid* merit as the last, dull as it unquestionably was. But, as I have already said, it is very easy to avoid that dulness which arises only from uniformity, since, for this purpose, nothing more is necessary than to select, in each number, three or four articles which are capable of being treated with pleasantry, and to allot them to the persons best able to treat them in such a manner. If, to come at once to the point, you can suggest at present one or two of such articles to me, I will undertake them, and will readily employ my influence, if I possess any, with Gifford and W. Scott, to do the same with two or three more. This will at least render the tone and colouring of our next number sufficiently different from the last."

Isaac D'Israeli also tendered his advice. He was one of Mr. Murray's most intimate friends, and could speak

freely and honestly to him as to the prospects of the *Review*. He was at Brighton, preparing his third volume of the 'Curiosities of Literature.'

*Mr. I. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

"I have bought the complete collection of Memoirs written by individuals of the French nation, amounting to sixty-five volumes, for fifteen guineas. . . . What can I say about the *Q. R.*? Certainly nothing new; it has not yet invaded the country. Here it is totally unknown, though as usual the *Ed. Rev.* is here; but among private libraries, I find it equally unknown. It has yet its fortune to make. You must appeal to the *feelings* of Gifford! Has he none then? Can't you get a more active and vigilant Editor? But what can I say at this distance? The disastrous finale of the Austrians, received this morning, is felt here as deadly. Buonaparte is a tremendous Thaumaturgus! . . . I wish you had such a genius in the *Q. R.* . . . My son Ben assures me you are in Brighton. He saw you! Now, he never lies."\*

In another letter (Sept. 12) Mr. D'Israeli referred more particularly to the contents of No. 3.

"On the whole," he said, "it is a good number, though it has several articles objectionable in point of merit. The article on 'Insanity' by no means answers to the high account that was given of it. There is a good deal of writing, and a paucity of thinking in it, and it ends in nothing. There are but few articles in the *Review*. If this spirit of dissertation is too much encouraged, we may live to see a *Quarterly Review* composed on only one book! . . . The public want your *Review*. I always insisted on this. But I do not like the management, and I had hopes that ere now you would cease to trifle with them. I know your difficulties. . . . As for your *political friends*, one hardly knows if they do exist, or how they exist, such is their debility! What have they done for you? I think you ought now to consider for yourself, that the *Review* itself is at stake—not they! Perhaps they may be swept away before your next

\* Mr. Murray was in Brighton at the time.

*Quarterly*. We cannot command things always, but it is greatly to be regretted that you cannot have so important a machine as this made to act as you wish. One thing in its favour is this, that it is not like a work which when not done well, cannot be done again; a Review admits of improvement, and one or two good numbers may bring it prominently forward. Like our Constitution, it may contain in itself a renovating power."

Referring to Mrs. D'Israeli, who was suffering from indisposition, he said :

"If ever she regains her health, it will be an affair of Time; a physician, who indeed is not greedy of his fees, but who is very tedious in his cures.

"Pray remember me to Elliot.\* I am very happy in perceiving that you are in the bosom of your family with that relish of domestic pleasures which a good man and, indeed a fortunate man, only can enjoy."

Thus pressed by his correspondents, Mr. Murray did his best to rescue the *Quarterly* from failure. Though it brought him into prominent notice as a publisher, it was not by any means paying its expenses. Some thought it doubtful whether "the play was worth the candle." Yet Murray was not a man to be driven back by comparative want of success. He would try, again and again. He had many friends who were willing to help him, and who would have felt his failure as if it had been their own. He buckled again to the work, and in conjunction with Gifford, prepared for the fourth number of the *Quarterly*. He endeavoured to procure a better array of contributors. Amongst these were some very eminent men : Mr. John Barrow of the Admiralty ; the Rev. Reginald Heber, Mr. Robert Grant (afterwards Sir Robert, the Indian judge), Mr. Stephens, &c. How

\* Mr. Murray was in Edinburgh at the time. Elliot, his brother-in-law.

Mr. Barrow was induced to become a contributor is thus explained in his Autobiography.\*

“One morning, in the summer of the year 1809, Mr. Canning looked in upon me at the Admiralty, said he had often troubled me on business, but he was now about to ask me a favour. ‘I believe you are acquainted with my friend William Gifford?’ ‘By reputation,’ I said, ‘but not personally.’ ‘Then,’ says he, ‘I must make you personally acquainted; will you come and dine with me at Gloucester Lodge any day, the sooner the more agreeable—say to-morrow, if you are disengaged?’ On accepting, he said, ‘I will send for Gifford to meet you; I know he will be too glad to come.’

“‘Now,’ he continued, ‘it is right I should tell you that, in the *Review* of which two numbers have appeared, under the name of the *Quarterly*, I am deeply, both publicly and personally, interested, and have taken a leading part with Mr. George Ellis, Hookham Frere, Walter Scott, Rose, Southey, and some others; our object in that work being to counteract the *virus* scattered among His Majesty’s subjects through the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*. Now, I wish to enlist you in our corps, not as a mere advising idler, but as an efficient labourer in our friend Gifford’s vineyard.’ My reply was, ‘I am afraid you will be disappointed, for I have not the least notion how to set about writing a *Review*, and one from me would only serve as a foil to the brilliant productions of the gentlemen you have mentioned; besides, I should tremble in submitting my crude observations to the scrutinizing eye of such a critic as Mr. Gifford.’ ‘He will be overjoyed to have you, and will tell you that he who could write “*Travels in Southern Africa*,” and the “*British Embassy to the Emperor of China*,” can never find himself at a loss to review the work of any writer, provided he understands the subject.’

“‘There is one thing,’ he added, ‘I must mention to you. It is intended, and, indeed, the Editor has been instructed, that every writer in the *Review*, without any distinction, is to be paid for whatever he produces; that is a point about which no difficulty is to be made. I can assure you I myself have received pay for a short article I have already

\* ‘Autobiographical Memoir of Sir John Barrow,’ Murray, 1847.



contributed, merely to set the example. Gifford will tell you the rest to-morrow.'

"We met, and Gifford told me all that Mr. Canning had said, and a great deal more, and would not listen to any objection I offered on the score of novelty and my inexperience of reviewing; he repeated Canning's observation that the writer of books can have no difficulty in reviewing books, which I, on the contrary, urged to be a *non sequitur*. He begged me to name any book to make choice of, which he would take care to send to me. Finding there was no getting rid of Gifford, I mentioned one I had just been reading, De Guignes's 'History of the Dutch Embassy to China,' which immediately followed ours. 'Bravo! by all means let me have De Guignes and the Dutch Ambassador to the Court of the Emperor of China, it is a subject of all others I should wish for; it is one at your fingers' ends, and one that few know anything about; pray, let me have it for the forthcoming number; three only have yet appeared, and I'm gasping for something new. Pray, my good fellow, do indulge me.' . . .

"I had a visit from him the next morning after the meeting at Gloucester Lodge, and told him that the 'Voyage à Peking' was already laid down on the stocks, and should be ready for launching when required. He was very thankful, and professed his obligations in warm terms. 'But,' he added, 'the *Quarterly* has a most voracious maw, and requires to have her food very regularly served up at fixed times; would you, now, think me unreasonable if I were to suggest a second article for No. 5?' I laughed and said, 'It would be well, perhaps, for both of us to wait the reception of the one just commenced.' However, he subsequently carried his point, and I not only gave him 'Voyages d'Entrecasteaux' for No. 5, but 'Ta-tsing-leu-lee, or The Laws of China;' and I may add, once for all, that what with Gifford's eager and urgent demands, and the exercise becoming habitual and not disagreeable, I did not cease writing for the *Quarterly Review* till I had supplied no less, rather more, than 190 articles. . . . The number as above stated must appear enormously large, and yet they were written off-hand as an amusement, many of them in the busiest periods of official duties; but my evenings were generally spent at home with my family, and writing was to me a relaxation, after dinner, and a relief

from the dry labours of the day. I may add that every article written for the *Quarterly* was sure to be followed by a long letter from Gifford, pointing out what would be a desirable subject for the next number, or asking me to name one. Mr. Murray also frequently suggested a new work for my consideration, and certainly showed himself quite satisfied with my performances."

The fourth number of the *Quarterly*, which was due in November, was not published until the end of December 1809. Gifford's excuse was the want of copy. He wrote to Mr. Murray: "We must, upon the publication of this number, enter into some plan for ensuring regularity." Southey complained that the necessary books had not been sent him in time to prepare one of his articles. To Walter Scott, Southey wrote:

*Mr. Southey to Mr. Scott.*

Oct. 2, 1809.

"I have a bill of indictment against those Eclectics and Vice-Society men, whenever Murray shall send me the needful documents; for, be it known unto you that in one of the *Eclectic Reviews* there is a grand passage describing *the soul of Shakspeare in Hell!* If I do not put some of these Pharisees into Purgatory for this, for the edification of our *Quarterly Review* readers, then may my right hand forget its cunning."

A few days later, he wrote to Neville White:

"I have more respect for the Independents than for any other body of Christians, the Quakers alone excepted. . . . Their English history is without a blot. Their American has, unhappily, some bloody ones, which you will see noticed in the next number of the *Quarterly*, if my review of Holmes's *American Annals* should appear there in an unmutilated state."

Although it appeared late, the fourth number was the best that had yet been issued. It was more varied in its

contents ; containing articles by Scott, Southey, Barrow, and Heber. But the most important article was contributed by Robert Grant, on the "Character of the late C. J. Fox." This was the first article in the *Quarterly*, according to Mr. Murray, which excited general admiration, concerning which we find a memorandum in Mr. Murray's own copy ; and, what was an important test, it largely increased the demand for the *Review*.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PUBLISHING BUSINESS—THE ‘QUARTERLY’—CONSTABLE  
AND BALLANTYNE.

DURING the year in which the *Quarterly* was first given to the world, the alliance between Murray and the Ballantynes was close and intimate : their correspondence was not confined to business matters but bears witness to warm personal friendship.

Murray was able to place much printing work in their hands, and amongst other books, ‘Mrs. Rundell’s Cookery,’ which was then beginning to attain to a very large circulation, was printed at the Canongate Press.

They exerted themselves to promote the sale of one another’s publications and engaged in various joint works, such, for example, as Grahame’s ‘British Georgics’ and Scott’s ‘English Minstrelsy.’

In the midst of all these transactions, however, there were not wanting symptoms of financial difficulties, which, as in a previous instance, were destined in time to cause a severance between Murray and his Edinburgh agents. It was the old story—drawing bills for value *not* received. Murray had seriously warned the Ballantynes of the risks they were running in trading beyond their capital. James Ballantyne replied on March 30, 1809 :—

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

“Suffer me to notice one part of your letter respecting which you will be happy to be put right. We are by no

means trading beyond our capital. It requires no professional knowledge to enable us to avoid so fatal an error as that. For the few speculations we have entered into our means have been carefully calculated and are perfectly adequate."

Yet at the close of the same letter, referring to the 'British Novelists'—a vast scheme, to which Mr. Murray had by no means pledged himself—Ballantyne continues :

"For this work permit me to state I have ordered a font of types, cut expressly on purpose, at an expense of near £1000, and have engaged a very large number of compositors for no other object."

On the 14th of June, James Ballantyne wrote to Murray :

"I can get no books out yet, without interfering in the printing office with business previously engaged for, and that puts me a little about for cash. Independent of *this* circumstance, upon which we reckoned, a sum of £1500 payable to us at 25th May, yet waiting some cursed legal arrangements, but which we trust to have very shortly (*sic*). This is all preliminary to the enclosures which I hope will not be disagreeable to you, and if not, I will trust to their receipt *accepted*, by return of post."

Mr. Murray replied on the 20th of June :—

"I regret that I should be under the necessity of returning you the two bills which you enclosed, unaccepted ; but having settled lately a very large amount with Mr. Constable, I had occasion to grant more bills than I think it proper to allow to be about at the same time."

This was not the last application for acceptances, and it will be found that in the end it led to an entire separation between the firms.

The Ballantynes, however, buoyed up by rash hopes, and teeming with enterprise, were more sanguine than prudent. In spite of Mr. Murray's warning that they were

proceeding too rapidly with the publication of new works, they informed him that they had a "gigantic scheme" in hand—the 'Tales of the East,' translated by Henry Weber, Walter Scott's private secretary—besides the 'Edinburgh Encyclopædia,' and the 'Secret Memoirs of the House of Stewart.' They said that Scott was interested in the 'Tales of the East,' and in one of their hopeful letters they requested Mr. Murray to join in their speculations. His answer was as follows:—

*John Murray to Messrs. Ballantyne & Co.*

Oct. 31st, 1809.

"I regret that I cannot accept a share in the 'Edinburgh Encyclopædia.' I am obliged to decline by motives of prudence. I do not know anything of the agreement made by the proprietors, except in the palpable mismanagement of a very exclusive and promising concern. I am therefore fearful to risk my property in an affair so extremely unsuitable.

"You distress me sadly by the announcement of having put the 'Secret Memoirs' to press, and that the paper for it was actually purchased six months ago! How can you, my good sirs, act in this way? How can you imagine that a bookseller can afford to pay eternal advances upon almost every work in which he takes a share with you? And how can you continue to destroy every speculation by entering upon new ones before the previous ones are properly completed? . . . Why, with your influence, will you not urge the completion of the 'Minstrelsy'? Why not go on with and complete the series of De Foe? . . . For myself, I really do not know what to do, for when I see that you will complete nothing of your own, I am unwillingly apprehensive of having any work of mine in your power. What I thus write is in serious friendship for you. I entreat you to let us complete what we have already in hand, before we begin upon any other speculation. You will have enough to do to sell those in which we are already engaged. As to your mode of exchange and so disposing of your shares, besides the universal obloquy which attends the practice in the mind of every respectable bookseller, and the certain damnation which it invariably causes both

to the book and the author, as in the case of Grahame, if persisted in, it must end in serious loss to the bookseller . . . If you cannot give me your solemn promise not to exchange a copy of Tasso, I trust you will allow me to withdraw the small share which I propose to take, for the least breath of this kind would blast the work and the author too—a most worthy man, upon whose account alone I engaged in the speculation.”

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

“We are sorry that the ‘Secret Memoirs’ going to press has occasioned you any uneasiness, but it is lucky it can be easily obviated. We shall, with your permission, keep all the book. I think I need scarcely add that I, who am so much more deeply interested than anybody else, have taken especial care that it neither interferes with De Foe, the ‘Tales,’ or any other work we have going on. . . . I do not wonder that you are apprehensive of trusting us with works to print, but I think the apprehension groundless; for, in order to keep the engagements in form, as well as our other accounts, you observe that we have even given up the ‘Encyclopædia. We certainly shall, in compliance with your desire, complete the engagements already entered into with you before we propose any new ones; and we must take our chance of selling our share in the books, in which perhaps you may be correct in supposing we have enough to do. . . . We beg, with yourself, to disclaim being actuated by any ill-temper in this letter. For your good wishes we thank you. For our success in life we must continue to pursue those means which, with rather a favourable result, we have done hitherto.”

The “alliance offensive and defensive” between Murray and the Ballantynes, in opposition to Constable & Co., which Scott had mentioned to Southey and Ellis, promised to be short-lived. Murray and Constable drew a little closer together. In fact Murray, who was doing a considerable business in London for the Edinburgh firm, wrote in November 1809 to Constable:—

“I find I have paid you nearly £7000 during the last twelve months, which, I think, is pretty well. You can

draw upon me for the remainder at four months. £921 2s. 8d. is due on the 30th of this month."

Constable looked with jealousy at the operations of the house of Ballantyne. Their firm had indeed been started in opposition to himself; and it was not without a sort of gratification that he heard of their pecuniary difficulties. Scott's 'Lady of the Lake' had been announced for publication. Constable refers to this circumstance, at the close of his letter to Murray:—

*Mr. A. Constable to John Murray.*

Jan. 20th, 1810.

"I have no particular anxiety about promulgating the folly (to say the least of it) of certain correspondents of yours in this quarter; but if you will ask our friend Mr. Miller if he had a letter from a shop nearly opposite the Royal Exchange the other day, he will, I dare say, tell you of the contents. I am mistaken if their game is not well up! Indeed I doubt much if they will survive the 'Lady of the Lake.' She will probably help to drown them!"

An arrangement had been made with the Ballantynes that, in consideration of their being the sole agents for Mr. Murray in Scotland, they should give him the opportunity of taking shares in any of their publications. Instead, however, of offering a share of the 'Lady of the Lake' to Mr. Murray, according to the understanding between the firms, the Ballantynes had already parted with one fourth share of the work to Mr. Miller, of Albemarle Street, London, whose business was afterwards purchased by Mr. Murray. Mr. Murray's letter to Ballantyne & Co. thus describes the arrangement:—

*John Murray to Messrs. Ballantyne & Co.*

March 26th, 1810.

"Respecting my *Review*, you appear to forget that your engagement was that I should be your sole agent here, and



that you were to publish nothing but what I was to have the offer of a share in. Your deviation from this must have led me to conclude that you did not desire or expect to continue my agent any longer. You cannot suppose that my estimation of Mr. Scott's genius can have rendered me indifferent to my exclusion from a share in the 'Lady of the Lake.' I mention this as well to testify that I am not indifferent to this conduct in you as to point it out to you, that if you mean to withhold from me that portion which you command of the advantages of our connexion, you must surely mean to resign any that might arise from me. The sole agency for my publications in Edinburgh is worth to any man who understands his business £300 a year ; but this requires zealous activity and deference on one side, and great confidence on both, otherwise the connexion cannot be advantageous or satisfactory to either party. For this number of the *Review* I have continued your name solely in it, and propose to make you as before sole publisher in Scotland ; but as you have yourself adopted the plan of drawing upon me for the amount of each transaction, you will do me the favour to consider what quantity you will need, and upon your remitting to me a note at six months for the amount, I shall immediately ship the quantity for you."

*Mr. James Ballantyne to John Murray.*

"Your agency hitherto has been productive of little or no advantage to us, and the fault has not lain with us. We have persisted in offering you shares of everything begun by us, till we found the hopelessness of waiting any return ; and in dividing Mr. Scott's poem, we found it our duty to give what share we had to part with to those by whom we were chiefly benefited both as booksellers and printers."

This letter was accompanied with a heavy bill for printing the works of De Foe for Mr. Murray. A breach thus took place with the Ballantynes ; the publisher of the *Quarterly* was compelled to look out for a new agent for Scotland, and met with a thoroughly competent one in Mr. William Blackwood, the founder of the well-known publishing house in Edinburgh.

To return to the progress of the *Quarterly*. The fifth number, which was due in February 1810, but did not appear until the end of March, contained many excellent articles, though, as Mr. Ellis said, some of them were contributed by "good and steady but marvellously heavy friends." Yet he found it better than the *Edinburgh*, which on that occasion was "reasonably dull."

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

February 10th, 1810.

"The *Edinburgh* has at length come forth and with a good deal of spirit; but we will be better prepared for them the next time, and at least divide the public with them. I hope soon to hear all my contributions have come to hand. Not a line yet from Sharpe\* or Douglas. This is the true curse of gentlemen writers. Before I come to London I hope to have at least three veterans in constant pay. I mean men that will keep their engagements for an article each."

That Mr. Murray kept a close eye upon the contents is clear from his numerous letters to Mr. Gifford. He suggested that a note reflecting on Playfair should be left out of the article by Dr. Young on Archimedes, and also that the article on Sydney Smith was not quite proper, and might be objected to. Gifford replies:—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

"I had softened the note, but I can have no objection to do anything further with it. When the proof comes back we will look at it together, though I think there is truth in your observation. Pray be careful to remember that the anonymous writer of 'Ricardo'† is a different person from the anonymous writer of 'Parr' (*Edinburgh Review*),

\* Kirkpatrick Sharpe, whom Scott had been endeavouring to press into the service.

† The authorship of this article cannot now be ascertained, but it was probably written by Mr. Ellis.

who, I was told this morning, was the Bishop of Bristol! Let us keep our own secrets, and we shall do well. I wish, for my part, that every writer in the *Review* was unknown to me, and that not an article was heard of until it came out. Nothing is so hostile to our success as having too many confidants; but we shall grow wiser in time, I hope. Let us keep up our spirits, talk of the goodness of our ware, as the Edinburgh Reviewers and their friends do, and the world will do the rest."

But the most important article in No. 5 was the last, by Robert Southey. It was the 'Life of Nelson,' founded upon the Lives written by various authors which had recently been published. While the review of Nelson was in progress, Southey wrote to his friend Mr. Rickman:—

"The *Quarterly* pays me well—ten guineas per sheet; at the same measure, the *Annual* was only four. I have the bulky 'Life of Nelson' on hand, and am to be paid double. This must be for the sake of saying they give twenty guineas per sheet, as I should have been well satisfied with ten, and have taken exactly the same pains."

Southey did not recognise the generosity of the publisher. Perhaps he did not know that the *Review* was not then paying its expenses.

Gifford said of the article when he received it:—

"I have begun on 'Nelson,' and, though I have many erasures to make, I confess I think what remains very good."

George Ellis said of it:—

"I am glad that Southey's article is to be *animated* and inserted. My opinion is that his articles are always attractive; not indeed by their *spirit*, but by their candour, and by a luminous method and arrangement of his materials. Besides, he always conveys information, which is a great merit; and it will be, hereafter, on the value of your *Review* as a repertory of useful knowledge, much more than on the ingenuity of the reasonings and dis-

quisitions it may contain, that its importance as a collection, and its consequent admission into libraries, will depend."

In the course of the following year Mr. Murray induced Mr. Southey to expand his article in order that he might publish it as a separate volume: he wrote—

*John Murray to Mr. Southey.*

Oct. 28th, 1811.

"You have so much upon your mind at this time that appears to be urgent, that I would be ashamed to mention the 'Life of Nelson' were it to press you for it, but the fact is that I think it so noble a subject for you in every respect, that I wish it to receive all your care and a good portion of what Turner calls the 'prime' of your mind. Besides inserting every fact respecting the Hero, it will admit of your patriotic display of our power as a nation, which we have ourselves underrated, and still do underrate. There is scarcely a Gazette published which does not detail acts of individual heroism that in any other nation would have immortalized the actors. I wish it to be made such a book as shall become the heroic text of every midshipman in the Navy, and the association of Nelson and Southey will not, I think, be ungrateful to you. If it be worth your attention in this way I am disposed to think that it will enable me to treble the sum I first offered as a slight remuneration."

Although the 'Life of Nelson' is one of the most beautiful and attractive of Southey's works, he himself said of it: "This is a subject which I should not have dreamt of touching if it had not been thrust upon me." He received 100 guineas for the article, £100 for the enlargement of the Life, and £100 when it was afterwards published in the 'Family Library.'

The fifth number of the *Quarterly* was received with general satisfaction, and met with considerable praise even at the hands of such a severe critic as George Ellis. Still the lack of punctuality, a fault which increased rather than

diminished with each succeeding number, formed a most serious drawback to the success of the new periodical. Mr. Murray himself was greatly harassed by this perpetual irregularity. It was telling upon his health, and his friends feared that his constitution was breaking down. He was in this state when his old friend D'Israeli addressed him :—

*Mr. Isaac D'Israeli to John Murray.*

Montpelier Row, Blackheath, Aug. 2nd, 1810.

“I hope, my dear Murray, your stomach disorders do not proceed from harassing business, or any other cause of vexations from that source. Should they do so, in that case look well into the causes, and try whether they are not, by calmness and management, to be subdued and conducted by tolerable means. We may lose our balance in a moment, but sometimes a slight effort replaces us ; yet if this slight effort be not made, our motion is all against us. I am only writing suggestions in the air, and request you will attribute them to the true motive. I flatter myself that, on the contrary, your success and industry in trade will serve to animate you with prospects of realized hopes. Forgive then my anxiety ; but, as I know, when things do not go on smoothly, as they never can at all times, you are apt to be feelingly alive to them ; and I attribute your complaints, in many respects, to the worry and cares of business. Now I conclude with a wise ancient saw of Lord Burleigh's steward (I think) to his young master : ‘Be a good while in getting a little money, and you will then get a great deal afterwards in a short time. Lay the foundation safe and broad, and don't hurry up the superstructure.’

“I know, dear Murray, I am writing in the dead stillness of a parlour, and in an easy chair—and the truest wisdom consists in action ! However, lame persons have written some good dissertations on dancing. I thought it was now rather a dead season with you ; and should have been glad to have had you and Mrs. M. for a little change down with us.

“I took the *Q. R.* with me. I like it well ; and I do think it is far better than what you imagined it to be.

The article on the 'Fatal Revenge' is exquisite in humour, and very ingenious in criticism. I long to get to the Chinese article—'Ramayuna.' I now conceive, when you have once *established a regular period of publication*, that you have good writers enough to secure a regular sale and an increasing one, besides the chance occasionally of getting at some great and commanding article. I know it has cost you too much anxiety; but I hope you can contrive to go on with less of that, and in time with a profit that will be worth your attention . . . I hope you escape losses in the bankruptcies, among which are several bankers."

It was certainly not "a dead season" with Mr. Murray. At the time that D'Israeli's letter was written the August number was nearly due, though it was not yet half printed. Some of the articles were not even written, and Gifford suggested that the following notice should be placed on the cover of the forthcoming *Review*: "Unforeseen accidents have delayed the appearance of the present number; but arrangements have been made to ensure a more regular publication in future."

Mr. Murray, writing to Mr. Scott (August 28th, 1810) as to the appearance of the new number, said:—

"I believe we shall have a super-excellent number this time. As far as we are already printed and promised, we are very good indeed." After giving an account of the articles printed, he comes to the fourth article. "This," he said, "is a review of the 'Daughters of Isenberg, a Bavarian Romance,' by Mr. Gifford, to whom the authoress (Alicia T. Palmer) had the temerity to send three £1 notes!"

With respect to this article, written by Gifford himself, for which the lady at Bath sent him a bribe of £3, instead of sending back the money with indignation, as he at first proposed, he reviewed the romance, and assumed that the authoress had sent him the money for charitable purposes.

*Mr. Gifford to Miss A. T. Palmer.*

"Our avocations leave us but little leisure for extra-official employment; and in the present case she has inadvertently added to our difficulties by forbearing to specify the precise objects of her bounty. We hesitated for some time between the Foundling and Lying-in Hospitals: in finally determining for the latter, we humbly trust that we have not disappointed her expectations, nor misapplied her charity. Our publisher will transmit the proper receipt to her address."

A difference occurred between Mr. Murray and the editor with respect to the insertion of an article by the Rev. J. Davidson on "Oxford and Mr. Coplestone," in answer to the calumnies of the *Edinburgh Review*.

"I thank you," said Gifford to Murray, from Ryde, "for Coplestone, which I read with great pleasure; it is his *chef-d'œuvre*—very dexterous, very cutting, and very gentlemanlike."

Mr. Murray replied:—

*John Murray to Mr. Gifford.*

I do entreat you to feel for me before you finally determine upon the insertion of the Oxford article. I cannot yet manage to make the *Review* pay its expenses, and it is only in the hope of having continually such a number as we expected to put forth this time, that I can in prudence proceed. The Oxford article can do Mr. Coplestone no service, because it is resting his argument upon a defence far inferior to his own in every respect. It will be of great evil to us; for everyone interested in the dispute will be disappointed if not disgusted with our having put forth, upon a subject so very difficult as regards ourselves, a weaker defence than they have previously read. It were hard to insert what I know would be so very prejudicial to me. I know indeed that you would not press it but for the dilemma in which its rejection would place you; but I think that a letter from you to Mr. C. would show it to be his own interest to retain it for the present; and the writer

might be informed that Mr. C. wishes, before any more is published on the subject, to see if his adversaries answer his last reply.

Pitt arrived so late that it is impossible to get the number out this week. We may yet, therefore, hope for Crabbe, and this with Southey's article on the Faroe Islands\* will make a number good enough to apologise for a delay which otherwise carries ruin with it. For all this, I do most sincerely and devotedly rely upon your judgment and energy, in consideration of the great capital (nearly £5000) that I have embarked in this concern. I mention this for the purpose of showing that no ordinary man of business would have done this. But I will venture twice that sum upon what I know to be able. I have not yet, upon my honour, paid my expenses in any one single number of the *Review*. You will not be displeased, therefore, if I am *over* anxious to improve in every number, and desirous of printing the very best material that we can procure. I will only add that whatever I may say respecting the articles is entirely from the suggestion of my own point of view—I mean that I neither show them to, nor consult with, any friend of mine. Having mentioned this, I leave the whole entirely to you. I am only anxious for our mutual satisfaction.

Yours most truly,  
J. MURRAY.

Mr. Gifford was annoyed by this letter. He said it had an air of intimidation.

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

“There is no necessity for you to pursue a losing speculation, which I should be the last person on earth to encourage; and there is yet time, I presume, to recover a considerable part of that £5000 which you have so unwisely put in hazard. . . . But I wish not to prolong this strain. A little more will make me quite weary of a post which is far enough from a pleasant one. To come to the chief purport of your letter, I will send it to Mr. C. if you

\* These two articles were not published until the following number appeared.



agree to abide by his answer ; on no other condition will I consent to violate my feeling by affronting a gentleman of character and reputation—for such Mr. Davidson is. He purposely came to town to see his article. He has seen it, he has revised it, and returned it in the full expectation of its appearance. After all, I do not quite enter into your opinion of it. It is clear, sensible, and intelligent. I wish, indeed, it had more spirit and interest—so I do of many other articles which pass muster very well.”

Mr. Ellis also interfered. Although, he said, the article was at once “tedious and feeble,” yet there were two considerations on which he would plead for its admission: “First, the positive request of Coplestone himself ; second, the utter impossibility of filling our number without it.” The article was accordingly inserted. On the 1st of October, Mr. Ellis wrote to the publisher:—

“Pray let me know when our *Quarterly* will *decidedly* appear ; for I am pestered to death with questions about it.”

The number did not appear until a month and a half after it was due. This was enough to have killed any publication which was not redeemed by the excellence of its contents.

One of the principal objections of Mr. Murray to the manner in which Mr. Gifford edited the *Quarterly* was the war which he waged with the *Edinburgh*. This, he held, was not the way in which a respectable periodical should be conducted. It had a line of its own to pursue, without attacking its neighbours. “Publish,” he said, “the best information, the best science, the best literature ; and leave the public to decide for themselves.” Relying on this opinion he warned Gifford and his friends against attacking Sydney Smith, and Leslie, and Jeffrey, because of their contributions to the *Edinburgh*. He

thought that such attacks had only the effect of advertising the rival journal, and rendering it of greater importance. With reference to the article on Sydney Smith's 'Visitation Sermon' in No. 5, Mr. George Ellis privately wrote to Mr. Murray:—

"Gifford, though the best-tempered man alive, is *terribly* severe with his pen; but S. S. would suffer ten times more by being turned into ridicule (and never did man expose himself so much as he did in that sermon) than from being slashed and cauterized in that manner."

Mr. Murray even expostulated with Mr. Ellis himself, because of his reference to the *Edinburgh Review* in his article on 'Clarke's Travels' in the seventh number.

*Mr. Ellis to John Murray.*

Sept. 15th, 1810.

"I have now erased, in conformity with your wishes, some of the allusions to the *E. R.*, and have left, indeed, only *one* prominent quotation from them (that relating to Astrachan); to evince the extreme bad taste of which I have, instead of making any comment of my own, subjoined a note at the bottom of the page from Bell's very valuable 'Travels.' You will readily believe that I am never very anxious to enter the lists with our adversaries, and I generally wish to avoid it, because it is certain that, *if* in such a conflict we should ever be guilty of the sort of grossness which they employ, we should injure ourselves with rational readers. But I cannot agree with you in thinking that when they have formally thrown down the gauntlet (as they have done on the subject of Dr. Clarke), we are bound altogether to abstain from noticing their defiance, because, as they unquestionably possess, and, to a certain degree, deserve, a high reputation, we cannot, without a degree of affectation even more ridiculous than that of Sydney Smith, pretend a total ignorance of their opinions."

After further explanations about the Oxford article in No. 7, Mr. Murray and Mr. Gifford went on again harmoniously.

*John Murray to Mr. Gifford.*

Sept. 25th, 1810.

"I entreat you to be assured that the term 'intimidation' can never be applied to any part of my conduct towards you, for whom I entertain the highest esteem and regard, both as a writer and as a friend. If I am over-anxious, it is because I have let my hopes of fame as a bookseller rest upon the establishment and celebrity of this journal. My character, as well with my professional brethren as with the public, is at stake upon it ; for I would not be thought silly by the one, or a mere speculator by the other. I have a very large business, as you may conclude by the capital I have been able to throw into this one publication, and yet my mind is so entirely engrossed, my honour is so completely involved in this one thing, that I neither eat, drink, nor sleep upon anything else. I would rather it excelled all other journals and I gained nothing by it, than gain £300 a year by it without trouble if it were thought inferior to any other. This, sir, is true."

Meanwhile, Mr. Murray was becoming hard pressed for money. To conduct his increasing business required a large floating capital, for long credits were the custom, and besides his own requirements, he had to bear the constant importunities of the Ballantynes to renew their bills. On the 25th of July, 1810, he wrote to them : " This will be the last renewal of the bill (£300) ; when it becomes due, you will have the goodness to provide for it." It was, however, becoming impossible to continue dealing with them, and he gradually transferred his printing business to other firms. We find him about this time ordering Messrs. George Ramsay & Co., Edinburgh, to print 8000 of the ' Domestic Cookery,' which was still having a large sale.

The Constables were also pressing him for renewals of bills.

*John Murray to Messrs. Constable & Co.*

Oct. 27th, 1810.

GENTLEMEN,

I received to-day your £1000 ; the £500 at three days my bankers did for me as a favour, and thus I am, thank God, enabled to pay your bill to-day, and the two on Monday, amounting to £975. I trust that you do really feel sensible of the great uneasiness I must have undergone lately, and particularly in not hearing from you on Thursday and Friday, with these bills hanging over you, which I could not have stopped. I, for the last time, entreat you to remit me at least two whole days before your bills become due, and as much earlier as possible. It is actually your own interest, for many reasons, to do this. I have suffered excessively, and have borrowed, borrowed, borrowed, until I am ashamed. You must believe that my only motive for giving Mr. Elliot bills of my own for discount was urgent necessity. I had collected no others of discountable date, and in that case your bills upon me choked up my credit, and I could not avail myself of this means to my own service. I confide in your kindness to send me off to-morrow all that your letter of to-day promised. I send you some more bills, of which I would be thankful if you would send me £350, so that I may receive it on Tuesday the 12th.

Yours, etc.,  
J. M.

The case became more urgent from day to day. Constable did not meet his bills, and took no notice of Murray's repeated letters, six of which remained unanswered. At length Constable answered his communications, and Murray replied as follows :—

*John Murray to Messrs. Constable.*

Nov. 24th, 1810.

“ You will not have been long in alarm about my waiting the return of a letter from you, before I would accept your draft upon me for £500 ; but you have occasioned me so much distress lately by not attending either to my complaints or to your own promises of remitting to me in time

for retiring your own bills, that you certainly deserved what the Bank Directors call a 'rap over the knuckles.' I would not endure a recurrence of the same for a premium of £300 per annum. In future advise with your drafts, and send me others payable one day before, in London."

At a later date, when the Messrs. Constable offered him a share in certain new books about to appear, in conjunction with Cadell and Miller, Mr. Murray replied :—

*John Murray to Messrs. Constable.*

March 21st, 1811.

"With regard to myself, I will engage in no new work of any kind. You know perfectly well how much I am hampered by the quantity I have already printed, and I will enter upon no new speculation until I have cleared myself. The shares which I took in your books whilst in London were taken from no other motive than that of personal regard to you, with the promise of twelve months' credit, and extension if I required it; but I cannot go any further. You know, too, that my speculation in Campbell's new work is enough for two years' engagement. But I will do all I can to serve you, and this I would do for no other person, and it is privately and in strict confidence that I communicate it."

Another letter of a similar character followed :—

*John Murray to Mr. A. Constable.*

April 4th, 1811.

DEAR CONSTABLE,

I have so invariably testified my desire to serve you, that I could have wished that you had not pressed the share in 'Seward' again, after what I stated to you upon that subject in my last. You know how much I have distressed myself by entering heedlessly upon too many engagements, and you must be sensible that I could not, under so much consequent vexation, have taken shares in many of your speculations, unless it had been from the sole motive of showing my continued regard to you by relieving your pressing anxiety. If you need any further

proof of this, I can only say that I will resign the whole to your disposal, but you must not urge me to involve myself in renewed difficulties.

To return to the *Quarterly* No. 8. One can easily imagine the anxiety and distress of the publisher when, owing to the repeated delay in publication, the circulation fell off from 5000 to 4000. Gifford himself often thought of giving up the editorship ; he felt that his physical strength was insufficient for the proper care and management of the still struggling periodical.

Mr. George Ellis, the faithful friend of the publisher, clearly saw the injury done to the progress of the *Quarterly*. He wrote to Mr. Murray :—

*Mr. George Ellis to John Murray.*

“To our extensive success there is at present, very obviously, only *one* intelligible obstacle, which is a degree of *irregularity* which must of necessity induce in the public mind a doubt of our ultimate perseverance. Those who perceive that we are from quarter to quarter less and less punctual, *must* infer from it that we feel progressively more and more the difficulty of fulfilling our engagements, and are likely in a short time to abandon the enterprise in despair. No opinion of the *merit* of our *Review* will or can support us against this supposition . . . Hence I infer that *punctuality* is, in our present situation, our great and only desideratum. This we *must* attain. Whether we precede or follow our rivals is immaterial ; but the days of publication once fixed, we must adhere to them.”

Accordingly, increased efforts were made to have the *Quarterly* published with greater punctuality, though it was a considerable time before success in this respect was finally reached. Gifford pruned and pared down to the last moment, and often held back the publication until an erasure or a correction could be finally inserted.

No. 9 due in February 1811, was not published until March. From this time Southey became an almost constant contributor to the *Review*. He wrote with ease, grace, and rapidity, and there was scarcely a number without one, and sometimes two and even three articles from his pen. His prose style was charming—clear, masculine, and to the point, but he prided himself more upon his poetry than upon his prose. The public did not see his merits in the same light, for while they eagerly read his prose, his poetry remained unnoticed on the shelves. In December 1807, Southey said he had gained only £25 by ‘Madoc,’ and in the following year, his ‘Thalaba’ fell still-born from the press. “My whole profits upon it,” he said, “have amounted to five-and-twenty pounds. But I cast my bread upon the waters, and if I myself should not live to find it after many days, my children will.”

The ‘Curse of Kehama’ came out in 1810, and notwithstanding Walter Scott’s kindly review of it, the work did not sell. Southey said of the poem :—

“With regard to ‘Kehama,’ I was perfectly aware that I was planting acorns while my contemporaries were setting Turkey beans. The oak will grow, and though I may never sit under its shade, my children will. Of the ‘Lady of the Lake,’ 25,000 copies have been printed ; of ‘Kehama,’ 500 ; and if they sell in seven years, I shall be surprised.”

Scott did not act as some literary people do—cut up his friend in a review. He pointed out the beauties of the poem, in order to invite purchasers and readers. Yet his private opinion to his friend George Ellis was this :—

*Mr. Scott to Mr. G. Ellis.*

“I have run up an attempt on the ‘Curse of Kehama’ for the *Quarterly* : a strange thing it is—the ‘Curse’ I mean

—and the critique is not, as the blackguards say, worth a damn; but what I could I did, which was to throw as much weight as possible upon the beautiful passages, of which there are many, and to slur over its absurdities, of which there are not a few. It is infinite pity for Southey, with genius almost to exuberance, so much learning and real good feeling of poetry, that, with the true obstinacy of a foolish papa, he *will* be most attached to the defects of his poetical offspring. This said ‘Kehama’ affords cruel openings to the quizzers, and I suppose will get it roundly in the *Edinburgh Review*. I could have made a very different hand of it indeed, had the order of the day been *pour déchirer*.”

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, Dec. 3rd, 1810.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your packet with Cromek's additional sweepings. In his Nithesdale, &c., Sketches he has, I think, had the assistance of a Mr. Mounsey Cunningham who used to correspond with Mr. Constable's ‘Scottish Magazine’ under the signature J. M. C. I wish you would learn how this stands, for he is a man of some genius, and I would like to treat him civilly, whereas Cromek is a perfect brain-sucker, living upon the labours of others. I have just got ‘Kehama,’ and I hope to have it ready for the *Review*, so I wish you would keep a corner. I shall be puzzled to do justice to the *Review* in noticing its great blemishes, and to the author in pointing out its numerous brilliancies, but I must do the best I can. I had Weber's Romances in hand, but I have laid them aside for this more pressing and more interesting matter.

I beg you will keep my remittances till the end of the year, and shall write so to Mr. Gifford. It is sometimes convenient to have credit for a few guineas in London. Believe me that as I have not had any cause whatever, so I have not had the least intention to slacken our correspondence, but the dulness of the literary world, at least in those articles of lighter calibre in which I deal, gave me but little to say.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT.



It was a good thing for Southey that he could always depend upon his contributions to the *Quarterly* for his daily maintenance, for he could not at all rely upon the income from his poetry.

The failure of the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, published by Ballantyne, led to a diminution of Southey's income amounting to about £400 a year. He was thus led to write more and more for the *Quarterly*. His reputation, as well as his income, rose higher from his writings there than from any of his other works. In April 1812 he wrote to his friend Mr. Wynn :—

*Mr. Southey to Mr. Wynn.*

"By God's blessing I may yet live to make all necessary provision myself. My means are now improving every year. I am up the hill of difficulty, and shall very soon get rid of the burthen which has impeded me in the ascent. I have some arrangements with Murray, which are likely to prove more profitable than any former speculations . . . Hitherto I have been highly favoured. A healthy body, an active mind, and a cheerful heart, are the three best boons Nature can bestow, and, God be praised, no man ever enjoyed these more perfectly."

## CHAPTER IX.

MURRAY AND GIFFORD—BALLANTYNE AND CONSTABLE  
—PROSPERITY OF THE ‘QUARTERLY.’

FROM this time, forward the best understanding prevailed between Mr. Murray and the editor of the *Quarterly*. Their intercourse was continuous; and as they knew each other better they esteemed each other the more. They became fast and intimate friends; holding nothing back from each other, but taking counsel on all matters relating not only to articles for the *Quarterly*, but to new manuscripts offered to Mr. Murray for publication.

On Murray communicating the troubles and vexations attendant upon his increasing business correspondence, and his anxiety about the *Review*, to his friend and editor, Gifford wrote as follows :

“It is only by putting off trifles that they become onerous. Who is it that says

‘The wise and prudent conquer difficulties  
By daring to attempt them.’

It is the same with business difficulties. Meet them in the face and half the trouble is past.”

The *Quarterly* went on improving, and gradually increased in circulation. Though regular in the irregularity of its publication, the subscribers seem to have become accustomed to the delay, and when it did make its appearance it was read with eagerness and avidity. The

interest and variety of its contents and the skill of the editor in the arrangement of his materials, made up for many shortcomings.

Murray and Gifford were in constant communication as to the articles which were about to appear. With respect to the MS. which had been sent by Mr. Pillans \* to Mr. Murray for insertion in No. 10, Gifford wrote the following judicious letter:—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

May 17th, 1811.

DEAR MURRAY,

I have seldom been more pleased and vexed at a time than with the perusal of the enclosed MS. It has wit, it has ingenuity, but both are absolutely lost in a negligence of composition which mortifies me. Why will your young friend fling away talent which might so honourably distinguish him? He might, if he chose, be the ornament of our *Review*, instead of creating in one mingled regret and admiration. It is utterly impossible to insert such a composition as the present; there are expressions which would not be borne; and if, as you say, it will be sent to Jeffrey's if I do not admit it, however I may grieve, I must submit to the alternative. Articles of pure humour should be written with extraordinary attention. A vulgar laugh is detestable. I never saw much merit in writing rapidly. You will believe me when I tell you that I have been present at the production of more genuine wit and humour than almost any person of my time, and that it was revised and polished and arranged with a scrupulous care which overlooked nothing. I have not often seen fairer promises of excellence in this department than in your correspondent; but I tell you frankly that they will all be blighted and perish prematurely unless sedulously cultivated. It is a poor ambition to raise a casual laugh in the unreflecting.

I had conceived very high hopes from the paper on Miss Seward; I am justified by the present article; but are not

\* See *ante*, p. 123.

these hopes to be realised by care, by study, by correction ? To lose an assistant capable of such powerful aid, would indeed mortify me very greatly ; and I could wish you to insinuate in the gentlest manner that what is hastily written should, on that very account, be more anxiously revised ; and that no permanent reputation can be founded on thoughts thrown out at random, how ever brilliant, unless clothed in appropriate terms.

If you thought this young gentleman could be prevailed upon to look again at what he has written, and make such alterations as even he must now judge proper, I shall be really happy to avail myself of his extraordinary talents. He must see that it cannot appear in the *Quarterly* in its present form. Let me hear from you on this subject again.

I am ever, dear Sir, yours,

WM. GIFFORD.

The article did not appear in the *Quarterly*, and Pillans afterwards became a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. New contributors, however, were constantly making their appearance. In 1811 Mr. Macvey Napier (afterwards editor of the *Edinburgh*), while attending the Moral Philosophy Class in the Edinburgh University, sent to the editor of the *Quarterly* a review of Stewart's 'Philosophical Essays.' Mr. Gifford was greatly pleased with the contribution. "It seems a manly article," he wrote to Murray, "and as smart as it should be." In his letter (25th of August, 1811) to Napier, Gifford complimented him on the article, and thanked him most cordially, adding :—

"I have been nearly a week returned from Ryde. I am an aquatic animal, and take to a boat whenever I can. The weather did not favour me much ; but upon the whole I find myself improved by the expedition. I must, however, guard against any mistake. Health is with me merely a relative term ; for since the hour when I was

born I never enjoyed, as far as I can recollect, what you call *health* for a single day. However, as I have not much pain I do not find any occasion to complain."

On the 26th of November following he wrote to Mr Murray:—

"Your letter found me very ill with a swelling in my thigh from an old blow, and unable to stir. In three or four days I hope to be better."

After discussing the articles which were about to appear in the next *Review*, he concluded: "I write in pain and must break off." In the following month Mr. Murray, no doubt in consideration of the start which his *Review* had made, sent him a present of £500. "I thank you," he answered (Dec. 6th), "very sincerely for your magnificent present; but £500 is a vast sum. However, you know your own business."

Yet Mr. Murray was by no means abounding in wealth. We find his clerk writing to Dr. Strahan of Enfield pressing him for payment of his account, because, he said, "Mr. Murray is so very poor at this time." Then there were those overdrawn bills from Edinburgh to be met. Ballantyne and Constable were both tugging at him for accommodation at the same time.

*John Murray to Ballantyne & Co.*

December 5th, 1812.

GENTLEMEN,

It is not very generous to make me take up a bill for which I have so recently remitted you the means—at a time, too, when you know that my recent purchase\* must have swallowed up all my resources. I shall, however,

\* He had purchased the stock of Mr. Miller, of Albemarle Street, in May 1812.

take up the bill ; and in order to make matters still more comfortable to you (as you say you will not be in cash till after Christmas), I herewith return you your bills due this month and in January, and I have drawn for them, adding the £150 (your blank acceptance which I also enclose), with interest at two and three months — which bills you will make payable in Edinburgh and thus close the transaction. There is a balance of our old account due to me by your own statement, which you can deduct from the ‘*Voyages Imaginaires* ;’ and there is the freight also of Black’s ‘*Life of Tasso*,’ which I paid, to be deducted also. I am sorry to say that I am under the necessity of resigning my twelfth share in the ‘*Edinburgh Annual Register* ;’ for after making every effort to serve the book, I can be of no further use ; and therefore you will not consider me as having any concern with the future publication of that work. I will thank you to give me a list of any books which you can send me to balance the exchange of the copies of the Register, for which I had received ‘*Brewster’s Astronomy*’ in part.

I am, &c., yours,

J. M.

The business arrangements with Constable and Co. which, save for the short interruption which has already been related, had extended over many years, were now about to come to an end.

*John Murray to Mr. Constable.*

Albemarle St., October 27th, 1812.

“I do not see any existing reason why we, who have so long been so very intimate, should now be placed in a situation of negative hostility. I am sure that we are well calculated to render to each other great services ; you are the best judge whether your interests were ever before so well attended to as by me. . . . The great connexion which I have for the last two years been maturing in Fleet Street I am now going to bring into action here ; and it is not with any view to, or with any reliance upon, what Miller has done, but upon what I know I can do in such a situation, that I had long made up my mind to move. It

is no sudden thing, but one long matured ; and it is only from the accident of Miller's moving that I have taken his house ; so that the notions which, I am told, you entertain respecting my plans are totally outside the ideas upon which it was formed . . . I repeat, it is in my power to do you many services ; and, certainly, I have bought very largely of you, and you never of me ; and you know very well that I will serve you heartily if I can deal with you confidentially."

A truce was, for a time, made between the firms, but it proved hollow. Communications took place between them until the following May, after which they ceased to have further intercourse in matters of business. It appears that the house of Constable brought out Douglas's 'Peerage and Baronetage,' and offered a share of the publication to Murray. They offered shares also to two other London publishers ; and they introduced another London firm, whose name was inserted on the title-page. Mr. Murray refused to entertain the matter further—"being contrary to the terms proposed to me." The never-ending imposition of accommodation bills sent for acceptance had now reached a point beyond endurance, having regard to Murray's credit. The last letter from Murray to Constable and Co., was as follows :—

*John Murray to Constable & Co.*

April 30th. 1813.

GENTLEMEN,

I did not answer the letter to which the enclosed alludes, because its impropriety in all respects rendered it impossible for me to do so without involving myself in a personal dispute, which it is my anxious resolution to avoid : and because my determination was fully taken to abide by what I told you in my former letter, to which alone I can or could have referred you. You made an express proposition to me, to which, as you have deviated from it, it is not my intention to accede. The books may remain with me upon

sale or return, until you please to order them elsewhere ; and in the meantime I shall continue to avail myself of every opportunity to sell them. I return, therefore, an account and bills, with which I have nothing to do, and desire to have a regular invoice.

I am, gentlemen, yours truly,

J. MURRAY.

Constable and Co. fired off a final shot on the 28th of May following, and the correspondence and business between the firms then terminated.

No. 12 of the *Quarterly* appeared in December 1811. It contained papers by Southey, Barrow, Canning, Croker, and others. When Mr. Murray asked Southey to supply the review of James Montgomery's Poems, Southey replied as follows :—

*Mr. Southey to John Murray.*

“When application was made to me, some years ago, to bear a part in the *Edinburgh Review*, I refused, upon the ground, among others, of the cruel manner of criticism which Jeffrey had adopted ; and the case which I specified as peculiarly cruel and unjust was that of Montgomery's. I am very glad of the opportunity of doing justice to one whom I consider undoubtedly a man of genius. We have no bookseller in this place” (Keswick), added Southey, “except an old huckstering grocer, who gets down the magazines three weeks after date, and whose natural sourness, instead of being sweetened by his dealings in sugar, is hyperoxygenated by Methodism.”

Southey was still very angry with Gifford for the curtailment of his articles before publication. And yet he knew, well enough, the necessity of subordination in a review. When one, two, or three articles were by the same writer, Gifford had to bring them within bounds, to make room for his other contributors. Southey wrote so smoothly, so easily, so wordily, that he might often



have filled an entire review. Yet Gifford was generous to Southey, and often wrote to Murray of the excellence of his articles, though Southey did not know it. In one of his letters he said,—

“It is excellent. A little allowance must be made for the writer, but, on the whole, there is little that any one would wish away.”

The same number of the *Review* (No. 12) contained an article on Java, by Mr. Barrow, the proofs of which had been seen by Mr. Yorke and Mr. Perceval, and approved. But perhaps the most interesting article in the number was that by Canning and Ellis, on Trotter's ‘Life of Fox.’ Gifford writes to Murray about this article :—

“I have not seen Canning yet, but he is undoubtedly at work by this time. Pray take care that no one gets a sight of the slips. It will be a delightful article, but say not a word till it comes out.”

A pamphlet had been published by W. S. Landor, dedicated to the President of the United States, entitled, “Remarks upon Memoirs of Mr. Fox lately published.” Gifford was furious about it. He wrote to Murray :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

“I never read so rascally a thing as the Dedication. It is almost too bad for the Eatons and other publishers of mad democratic books. In the pamphlet itself there are many clever bits, but there is no taste and little judgment. His attacks on private men are very bad. Those on Mr. C. are too stupid to do much harm, or, indeed, any. The Dedication is the most abject piece of business that I ever read. It shows Landor to have a most rancorous and malicious heart. Nothing but a rooted hatred of his country could have made him dedicate his Jacobinical book to the most contemptible wretch that ever crept into authority, and whose only recommendation to him is his

implacable enmity to his country. I think you might write to Southey; but I would not, on any account, have you publish such a scoundrel address."

The only entire article ever contributed to the *Review* by Gifford himself was that which he wrote, in conjunction with Barron Field, on Ford's 'Dramatic Works.' It was an able paper, but it contained a passage, the publication of which occasioned Gifford the deepest regret. Towards the conclusion of the article these words occurred: The Editor "has polluted his pages with the blasphemies of a poor maniac, who, it seems, once published some detached scenes of the 'Broken Heart.'" This referred to Charles Lamb, who likened the "transcendent scene [of the Spartan boy and Calantha] in imagination to Calvary and the Cross." Now Gifford had never heard of the personal history of Lamb, nor of the occasional fits of lunacy to which he and his sister Mary were subject; and when the paragraph was brought to his notice by Southey, through Murray, it caused him unspeakable distress. He at once wrote to Southey \* the following letter:—

*Mr. W. Gifford to Mr. Southey.*

February 13th. 1812

MY DEAR SIR,

I break off here to say that I have this moment received your last letter to Murray. It has grieved and shocked me

\* When the subject of a memoir of Charles Lamb by Serjeant Talfourd was under consideration, Southey wrote to a friend: "I wish that I had looked out for Mr. Talfourd the letter which Gifford wrote in reply to one in which I remonstrated with him upon his designation of Lamb as a poor maniac. The words were used in complete ignorance of their peculiar bearings, and I believe nothing in the course of Gifford's life ever occasioned him so much self-reproach. He was a man with whom I had no literary sympathies; perhaps there was nothing upon which we agreed. except great political questions: but I liked him the better ever after for his conduct on this occasion."

beyond expression ; but, my dear friend, I am innocent so far as the intent goes. I call God to witness that in the whole course of my life I never heard one syllable of Mr. Lamb or his family. I knew not that he ever had a sister, or that he had parents living, or that he or any person connected with him had ever manifested the slightest tendency to insanity. In a word, I declare to you *in the most solemn manner* that all I ever knew or ever heard of Mr. Lamb was merely his name. Had I been aware of one of the circumstances which you mention, I would have lost my right arm sooner than have written what I have. The truth is, that I was shocked at seeing him compare the sufferings and death of a person who just continues to dance after the death of his lover is announced (for this is all his merit) to the pangs of Mount Calvary ; and not choosing to attribute it to folly, because I reserved that charge for Weber, I unhappily in the present case ascribed it to madness, for which I pray God to forgive me, since the blow has fallen heavily when I really thought it would not be felt. I considered Lamb as a thoughtless scribbler, who, in circumstances of ease, amused himself by writing on any subject. Why I thought so, I cannot tell, but it was the opinion I formed to myself, for I now regret to say I never made any inquiry upon the subject ; nor by any accident in the whole course of my life did I hear him mentioned beyond the name.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

W. GIFFORD.

No. 13 of the *Quarterly* contained an article on Lay Baptism by a new contributor—who was destined to attain great renown as a controversialist—the Rev. H. Phillpotts, afterwards Bishop of Exeter. It will be observed that Mr. Barrow, who had now become a most important and essential contributor to the *Review*, was the author of no fewer than three articles in this number. Croker had also become most important and useful ; Gifford spoke of him to Murray as “ really a treasure to us.” Southey, as active as ever, wrote to Murray :—

*Mr. Southey to John Murray.*

May 19th, 1812.

"I have laid the first stone of an article for our next number upon the French Revolution—a subject most mournfully well-timed. The direful state of the populace, which the late deplorable event has disclosed—though it may have surprised me less than it has done most people—has alarmed me deeply, because I have long distinctly seen the causes which were at work to produce it. The counter-acting causes on which my hopes were founded have not kept pace with them. At this moment, nothing but the army preserves us from the most dreadful of all calamities, an insurrection of the poor against the rich, and how long the army may be depended upon is a question which I scarcely dare ask myself. Of this I feel certain, that unless the most vigorous measures be speedily taken against those who by their speeches and writings are instigating the mob to rebellion, it will be too late; and they who may survive the coming horrors will see that the abuse of liberty is uniformly and inevitably punished with the loss of liberty. Its danger I will show in the *Quarterly*, but I believe the best means of stirring up the public mind is through the newspapers."

Southey's article appeared in No. 14, together with an article by Lord Dudley (J. W. Ward) on Reform. Croker contributed three articles, with respect to one of which he wrote to Murray, "I send you a hasty sketch, or rather a vile daub, of a portrait of Miss Edgeworth." These were written before the assassination of Mr. Perceval by the lunatic Bellingham, in the lobby of the House of Commons on the 11th of May, 1812. This event completely unmanned him, and he was unable to write for some time.

While the article No. 4 was still under consideration, Gifford wrote to Murray as follows, showing the influence over Gifford of his friend Dr. Ireland, which Murray considered baneful:—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

"Whatever be the case, Eveleigh cannot be left out this time without displeasing Dr. Ireland, who fully expects it. You have bad advisers, and the consequence is that many things are postponed which would have done well, and now only seem to create enemies. We ought to distrust our own judgments. How many things have you printed with reluctance that turned out favourites? Topics of general interest are certainly best; but a review cannot be filled with them—at least, I know not how they can be procured. I know the difficulties of supporting a review of this kind, and that nothing is to be got by it; but this could be no secret to you, and you, no more than me, had any reason to look for more help than we have found. I know no good writers, and what good writer did you bring to the undertaking? All was chance, and that was hardly enough to trust to. However, we are embarked, and it must be your care to hazard nothing. Cut in time, and no great harm can be done."

A little later, Gifford says:—

"If you mean by being no Calvinist, that Daly is not to come in, I do not see how this can be—as we shall have an article from Mr. C. in the No. following. Nor can I frame excuses for your omissions. This business begins to get too heavy for me, and I must soon have done, I fear."

Gifford, however, recovered his spirits, and went on conducting the *Quarterly* for many years longer, until eventually it became a complete success. The numbers appeared more regularly, the articles improved, and the circulation increased.

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

Ryde, Aug. 11th, 1812.

"I got down better than I expected, and arrived here on Wednesday to breakfast, cold and hungry, but not wet. I have lived in a state of positive idleness, and gone on the water every hour that the weather, which is miserable,

would let me ; and already I think myself much benefited. In a day or two I shall sit down to business, but my head is hardly yet settled, and this letter is merely to tell you that I am quite well, and pleased with my situation. Nancy [the housekeeper] is much better, and begs me to thank you for your kind inquiry."

We have been thus particular in describing the launching and establishing of the *Quarterly*, as it was the most important enterprise of Mr. Murray's life, to which he gave the principal portion of his time, and in the success of which he took the greatest pride. A few years later, in 1817, Southey wrote to his friend Bedford :—

"Murray offers me a thousand guineas for my intended poem in blank verse, and begs it may not be a line longer than 'Thomson's Seasons!' I rather think the poem will be a post obit, and in that case, twice that sum, at least, may be demanded for it. What his real feelings may be towards me, I cannot tell ; but he is a happy fellow, living in the light of his own glory. The *Review* is the greatest of all works, and it is all his own creation ; he prints 10,000, and fifty times ten thousand read its contents, in the East and in the West. Joy be with him and his journal !"

## CHAPTER X.

## LORD BYRON'S WORKS, 1811 TO 1814.

THE origin of Mr. Murray's connection with Lord Byron was as follows. Lord Byron had made Mr. Dallas a present of the MS. of the first two cantos of 'Childe Harold,' and allowed him to make arrangements for their publication. Mr. Dallas's first intention was to offer them to the publisher of 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,' but Cawthorn did not rank sufficiently high among his brethren of the trade. He was precluded from offering them to Longman and Co. because of their refusal to publish the Satire. He then went to Mr. Miller, of Albemarle Street, and left the manuscript with him, "enjoining the strictest secrecy as to the author." After a few days' consideration Miller declined to publish the poem, principally because of the sceptical stanzas which it contained, and also because of its denunciation as a "plunderer" of his friend and patron the Earl of Elgin, who was mentioned by name in the original manuscript of the poem.

After hearing from Dallas that Miller had declined to publish 'Childe Harold,' Lord Byron wrote to him from Reddish's Hotel :

*Lord Byron to Mr. Miller.*

July 30th, 1811.

SIR,

I am perfectly aware of the justice of your remarks, and am convinced that if ever the poem is published the same

objections will be made in much stronger terms. But, as it was intended to be a poem on *Ariosto's plan*, that is to say on *no plan* at all, and, as is usual in similar cases, having a predilection for the worst passages, I shall retain those parts, though I cannot venture to defend them. Under these circumstances I regret that you decline the publication, on my own account, as I think the book would have done better in your hands; the pecuniary part, you know, I have nothing to do with . . . But I can perfectly conceive, and indeed approve your reasons, and assure you my sensations are not *Archiepiscopal* enough as yet to regret the rejection of my Homilies.

I am, Sir, your very obedient, humble servant,  
BYRON.

"Next to these publishers," proceeds Dallas, "I wished to oblige Mr. Murray, who had then a shop opposite St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet Street. Both he and his father before him had published for myself. He had expressed to me his regret that I did not carry him the 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' But this was after its success; I think he would have refused it in its embryo state. After Lord Byron's arrival I had met him, and he said he wished I would obtain some work of his Lordship's for him. I now had it in my power, and I put 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' into his hands, telling him that Lord Byron had made me a present of it, and that I expected he would make a very liberal arrangement with me for it.

"He took some days to consider, during which time he consulted his literary advisers, among whom, no doubt, was Mr. Gifford, who was Editor of the *Quarterly Review*. That Mr. Gifford gave a favourable opinion I afterwards learned from Mr. Murray himself; but the objections I have stated stared him in the face, and he was kept in suspense between the desire of possessing a work of Lord Byron's and the fear of an unsuccessful speculation. We came to this conclusion: that he should print, at his expense, a handsome quarto edition, the profits of which I should share equally with him, and that the agreement for the copyright should depend upon the success of this edition. When I told this to Lord Byron he was highly pleased, but still doubted the copyright being worth my acceptance, promising, however, if the poem went through



the edition, to give me other poems to annex to 'Childe Harold.' "

That Mr. Murray was quick in recognizing the just value of poetical works and the merits of Lord Byron's poem is evident from the fact that at the very time that Miller declined to publish 'Childe Harold,' he accepted a poem by Rosa Matilda (Temple) which Murray had refused to publish, and that it was sold the year after as waste paper, whilst Murray jumped at the offer of publishing Lord Byron's poem, and did not hesitate to purchase the copyright for a large price.

Mr. Murray had long desired to make Lord Byron's acquaintance, and now that Mr. Dallas had arranged with him for the publication of the first two cantos of 'Childe Harold,' he had many opportunities of seeing Byron at his place of business. The first time that he saw him was when he called one day with Mr. Hobhouse in Fleet Street. He afterwards looked in from time to time, while the sheets were passing through the press, fresh from the fencing rooms of Angelo and Jackson, and used to amuse himself by renewing his practice of "*Carte et Tierce*," with his walking-cane directed against the book-shelves, while Murray was reading passages from the poem, with occasional ejaculations of admiration; on which Byron would say, "You think that a good idea, do you, Murray?" Then he would fence and lunge with his walking stick at some special book which he had picked out on the shelves before him. As Murray afterwards said, "I was often very glad to get rid of him!"

A correspondence took place with regard to certain omissions, alterations, and improvements which were strongly urged both by Mr. Dallas and the publisher. Mr. Murray wrote as follows:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 4th, 1811.

MY LORD,

An absence of some days, passed in the country, has prevented me from writing earlier, in answer to your obliging letters.\* I have now, however, the pleasure of sending you, under a separate cover, the first proof sheets of your poem; which is so good as to be entitled to all your care in rendering it perfect. Besides its general merits, there are parts which, I am tempted to believe, far excel anything that you have hitherto published; and it were therefore grievous indeed if you do not condescend to bestow upon it all the improvements of which your mind is so capable. Every correction already made is valuable, and this circumstance renders me more confident in soliciting your further attention. There are some expressions concerning Spain and Portugal which, however just at the time they were conceived, yet, as they do not harmonise with the now prevalent feeling, I am persuaded would so greatly interfere with the popularity which the poem is, in other respects, certainly calculated to excite, that, in compassion to your publisher, who does not presume to reason upon the subject, otherwise than as a mere matter of business, I hope your goodness will induce you to remove them; and with them perhaps some religious sentiments which may deprive me of some customers amongst the Orthodox. Could I flatter myself that these suggestions were not obtrusive, I would hazard another,—that you would add the two promised cantos, and complete the poem. It were cruel indeed not to perfect a work which contains so much that is excellent. Your fame, my Lord, demands it. You are raising a monument that will outlive your present feelings; and it should therefore be constructed in such a manner as to excite no other association than that of respect and admiration for your character and genius. I trust that you will pardon the warmth of this address, when I assure you that it arises, in the greatest degree, from a sincere regard for your best reputation; with, however, some view to that

\* These letters are given in Moore's 'Life and Letters of Lord Byron.'

portion of it which must attend the publisher of so beautiful a poem as you are capable of rendering in the 'Romaunt of Childe Harold.'

In compliance with the suggestions of the publisher, Byron altered and improved the stanzas relating to Elgin and Wellington. With respect to the religious, or anti-religious sentiments, Byron wrote to Murray: "As for the 'orthodox,' let us hope they will buy on purpose to abuse—you will forgive the one if they will do the other." Yet he did alter Stanza VIII., and inserted what Moore calls a "magnificent stanza," in place of one that was churlish and sneering, and in all respects very much inferior.

Byron then proceeded to another point. "Tell me fairly, did you show the MS. to some of your corps?" "I will have no traps for applause," he wrote to Mr. Murray, at the same time forbidding him to show the manuscript of 'Childe Harold' to his Aristarchus, Mr. Gifford, though he had no objection to letting it be seen by any one else. But it was too late. Mr. Gifford had already seen the manuscript, and pronounced a favourable opinion as to its great poetic merits. Byron was not satisfied with this assurance, and seemed, in his next letter, to be very angry. He could not bear to have it thought that he was endeavouring to ensure a favourable review of his work in the *Quarterly*. To Mr. Dallas he wrote (Sept. 23rd, 1811):—

"I *will* be angry with Murray. It was a book-selling, back-shop, Paternoster Row, paltry proceeding; and if the experiment had turned out as it deserved, I would have raised all Fleet Street, and borrowed the giant's staff from St. Dunstan's Church, to immolate the betrayer of trust. I have written to him as he was never written to before by an author, I'll be sworn; and I hope you will amplify my wrath, till it has an effect upon him."

Byron at first objected to allow the new poem to be published with his name, thinking that this would bring down upon him the enmity of his critics in the North, as well as the venom of the southern scribblers, whom he had enraged by his Satire. At last, on Mr. Murray's strong representation, he consented to allow his name to be published on the title-page as the author. Even to the last, however, his doubts were great as to the probable success of the poem ; and he more than once talked of suppressing it.

In Oct. 1811, Lord Byron wrote from Newstead Abbey to his friend Mr. Hodgson :—\*

“ ‘Childe Harold's Pilgrimage’ must wait till Murray's is finished. He is making a tour in Middlesex, and is to return soon, when high matter may be expected. He wants to have it in quarto, which is a cursed unsaleable size ; but it is pestilent long, and one must obey one's publisher.”

The whole of the sheets were printed off in the following month of January ; and the work was published on the 1st of March, 1812. Of the first edition only 500 copies, demy quarto, were printed.

It is unnecessary to say with what applause the book was received. The impression it produced was as instantaneous as it proved to be lasting. Byron himself briefly described the result of the publication in his memoranda : “ I awoke one morning and found myself famous.” The publisher had already taken pains to spread abroad the merits of the poem. Many of his friends had re-echoed its praises. The attention of the public was fixed upon the

\* The Rev. Francis Hodgson was then residing at Cambridge as Fellow and Tutor of King's College. He formed an intimate friendship with Byron, who communicated with him freely as to his poetical as well as his religious difficulties. Hodgson afterwards became Provost of Eton.

work ; and in three days after its appearance the whole edition was disposed of. When Mr. Dallas went to see Lord Byron at his house in St. James's Street, he found him loaded with letters from critics, poets, and authors, all lavish of their raptures. A handsome new edition, in octavo, was proposed, to which his Lordship agreed.

Mr. Dallas in his 'Memoir,' proceeds :—

"After speaking to Lord Byron of the sale, and settling the new edition, I said 'How can I possibly think of this rapid sale, and the profits likely to ensue, without recollecting'—'What?' interposed Byron. 'Think,' continued Dallas, 'what a sum your work may produce.' 'I shall be rejoiced,' said Byron, 'and wish it doubled and trebled ; but do not talk to me of money. I never will receive money for my writings.' 'I ought not to differ in an opinion which puts hundreds into my purse, but others'—He put out his hand to me, shook mine, and turned the conversation."

Eventually Mr. Murray consented to give Mr. Dallas £600 for the copyright of the poem ; although Mr. Gifford and others were of opinion that it might prove a bad bargain at that price. There was, however, one exception, namely Mr. Rogers, who told Mr. Murray not to be disheartened, for he might rely upon its turning out the most fortunate purchase he had ever made ; and so it proved. Three thousand copies of the second and third editions of the poem in octavo were printed ; and these went off in rapid succession.

While 'Childe Harold' was passing through the press, Mr. Murray again wrote :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

June 12th, 1812.

MY LORD,

I am truly anxious to know of your personal safety during this weather of turbulence and disaster. Only

three mails had arrived at 3 o'clock to-day. I called upon Mr. Gifford to-day, and he expresses himself quite delighted with the annexed Poems, more particularly with the 'Song from the Portuguese,' and the 'Stanzas to a Lady Weeping.' The latter, however, he thinks you ought to slip quietly amongst the Poems in 'Childe Harold'; for the present work is to be read by women, and this would disturb the poetical feeling. Besides, as it has been already published in a newspaper, it does not accord with your character to appear to think too much of it. If you allow me, I would transfer it to 'Childe Harold,' and insert the 'Impromptu' in its place.

Mr. Dallas has sent his proofs with about 200 alterations of the pointings merely. Now, as Gifford made nearly as many, I could not venture so direct an affront upon him as to overturn all that his care has taken. Mr. Moore returned his proof to me without a correction. I hope to go to press immediately upon receipt of your Lordship's letter. Mr. Gifford is really delighted.

I remain, in haste, most faithfully,

Your Lordship's Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

On the appearance of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' Lord Byron became an object of interest in the fashionable world of London. His poem was the subject of conversation everywhere, and many literary, noble, and royal personages desired to make his acquaintance. In the month of June he was invited to a party at Miss Johnson's, at which His Royal Highness the Prince Regent was present. As Lord Byron had not yet been to Court, it was not considered etiquette that he should appear before His Royal Highness. He accordingly retired to another room. But on the Prince being informed that Lord Byron was in the house, he expressed a desire to see him.

Lord Byron was sent for; he was introduced to the Prince, and was so much pleased with his fascinating

manner and entertaining conversation, that he declared it almost made him a courtier. The Prince's eulogistic references to Scott in the course of the interview reached the ears of Mr. Murray, who seized this opportunity to endeavour to heal the breach which had been caused between Scott and Byron by the unguarded satire in 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,' and wrote thus:—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

June 27th, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

I cannot refrain, notwithstanding my fears of intrusion, from mentioning to you a conversation which Lord Byron had with H.R.H. the Prince Regent, and of which you formed the leading subject. He was at an evening party at Miss Johnson's this week, when the Prince, hearing that Lord Byron was present, expressed a desire to be introduced to him; and for more than half an hour they conversed on poetry and poets, with which the Prince displayed an intimacy and critical taste which at once surprised and delighted Lord Byron. But the Prince's great delight was Walter Scott, whose name and writings he dwelt upon and recurred to incessantly. He preferred him far beyond any other poet of the time, repeated several passages with fervour, and criticized them faithfully. He spoke chiefly of the 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' which he expressed himself as admiring most of the three poems. He quoted Homer, and even some of the obscurer Greek poets, and appeared, as Lord Byron supposes, to have read more poetry than any prince in Europe. He paid, of course, many compliments to Lord Byron, but the greatest was "that he ought to be offended with Lord B., for that he had thought it impossible for any poet to equal Walter Scott, and that he had made him find himself mistaken." Lord Byron called upon me, merely to let off the raptures of the Prince respecting you, thinking, as he said, that if I were likely to have occasion to write to you, it might not be ungrateful for you to hear of his praises. It is remarkable that the Prince never mentioned Campbell. I inquired

particularly about this, as I was anxious to ascertain the Prince's opinion of both, as Lord Byron is rather partial to Campbell. The Prince is really worthy of a dedication, which, for many reasons, he would receive not only graciously, but gratefully. I sent you, some time ago, the 'Calamities of Authors,' a work by D'Israeli. It is much liked here. If the book suit your taste, and if the office accord with your leisure, I hope you may be tempted to favour me with a Review of it.\* I trust that your kindness may excuse the tittle-tattle which has occasioned this note; but I could not persuade myself that it would be uninteresting to you to know that you are equally esteemed by the Prince as I know you to be by the Princess.

Yours very faithfully,

JOHN MURRAY.

In reply Scott wrote to Mr. Murray as follows, enclosing a letter to Lord Byron, which has already been published in the lives of both authors:—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, July 2nd, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been very silent, partly through pressure of business and partly from idleness and procrastination, but it would be very ungracious to delay returning my thanks for your kindness in transmitting the very flattering particulars of the Prince Regent's conversation with Lord Byron. I trouble you with a few lines to his Lordship expressive of my thanks for his very handsome and gratifying communication, and I hope he will not consider it as intrusive in a veteran author to pay my debt of gratitude for the high pleasure I have received from the perusal of 'Childe Harold,' which is certainly the most original poem which we have had this many a day . . . . .

Your obliged, humble Servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

\* Scott's acknowledgment of this will be found in the preceding chapter.



This episode led to the opening of an agreeable correspondence between Scott and Byron, which resulted in a lasting friendship between the two poets.

On September 5, 1812, Lord Byron wrote to Mr. Murray requesting him to send several despatches and a number of the *Edinburgh Review*. "Send me 'Rokeby,'" he said. "Who the deuce is he? . . . Also send me 'Adair on Diet and Regimen,' just re-published by Ridgway." Mr. Murray's answer was as follows:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 7th, 1812.

MY LORD,

By the mail I have sent two letters, two parcels, and two Reviews. Mr. Ridgway assures me that it is impossible to complete a copy of the new edition of 'Adair on Diet' before to-morrow or the day following.

The tardy engraver promises the portrait in ten days, and I shall do myself the pleasure of sending a copy, for your Lordship's remarks, before it is prefixed to the poem, the demand for which proceeds with undiminished vigour. I have now sold, within a few copies, 4500 in less than six months, a sale so unprecedented, except in one instance, that you should cease to reproach the public and the publisher for "tardy editions." You will readily believe that I am delighted to find you thinking of a new poem, for which I should be proud to give a thousand guineas, and I should ever gratefully remember the fame it would cast over my new establishment, upon which I enter at the close of the present month.

Since I had the pleasure of seeing you I have had occasion to visit Lucien Bonaparte, to make arrangements for *his* poem, which, with the translation, will form two volumes in quarto, and which I am to publish immediately if his brother will permit its circulation on the Continent. Lucien is commanding and interesting in his person and address.

Walter Scott has, I am informed by his intimate friend Mr. Heber, retained very closely the *subject* of his new poem, which is, perhaps, not impolitic. The name of

'Rokeby' is that of his friend Mr. Morritt's estate in Yorkshire, to whom it is no doubt intended as a compliment. The poem, as the publisher informs me, will not be published before Christmas.

Indeed, my Lord, I hope that you will cut the tugging strings of care, and allow your mind to soar into its congenial element of poesy.

"From a delirious earth avert thine eyes  
And dry thy fruitless tears, and seek fictitious skies."  
D'ISRAELI.

You will easily conceive my contempt for anything in the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, when I venture to send you their vituperative criticism without previous notice. I am ashamed to see how long I may have trespassed upon your patience.

I am ever, &c.,

JOHN MURRAY.

Lord Byron did not like the engraved portrait of himself, to which he had a "very strong objection," and he requested that the plate might be destroyed, which was done accordingly.

In October 1812 Lord Byron wrote to Mr. Murray from Cheltenham:—"I have a poem on 'Waltzing' for you, of which I make you a present; but it must be anonymous. It is in the old style of 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.'" On Oct. 22nd Murray replied:—"I am distracted at this time between two houses, and am forced to write in haste. I had a sale, to the Booksellers, on Tuesday, when I disposed of no less than 878 copies of the fifth edition of 'Childe Harold,' from which you will judge of the belief of the booksellers in its continuing success. I am anxious to be favoured with the 'Waltzing'." A few days later, Lord Byron added—"You go on boldly; but have a care of *glutting* the public, who have by this time had enough of 'Childe Harold.' 'Waltzing' shall be

prepared. It is rather above two hundred lines, with an introductory letter to the publisher.”

‘The Waltz: an Apostrophic Poem,’ was published anonymously, and against the inclination of Murray, who had a poor opinion of it, in February 1813, but as the poem was not well received by the public, the author was anxious to disavow it. “I hear,” he wrote to Mr. Murray, “that a certain malicious publication on Waltzing is attributed to me. This report, I suppose, you will take care to contradict, as the author, I am sure, will not like that I should wear his cap and bells.”

Being a member of the Drury Lane Managing Committee, Lord Byron had been requested, with many others, to write a Prologue, to be recited at the opening of the theatre. Nearly a hundred prologues had been offered, but Lord Byron’s was accepted, a preference which induced “all Grub Street” to attack him. It was in reference to this circumstance that Mr. Murray addressed him:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

October, 1812.

I was present during the first recitation of the address, and can assure you that it was received, throughout, with applauding satisfaction. I have inclosed the copy of the address which I hold in my hand, and on which I marked, with my pencil—at the time, those parts at which the warmest approbation was loudly expressed. There was not the slightest demonstration, or appearance of dissatisfaction at any *one point*. There were many important variations in Mr. Elliston’s delivery, which was, throughout, exceedingly bad; indeed his acting exhibits nothing but conceit. I was surprised to find your name given up at once to the public, I confess, and the appendage to the address, stating the *reward* offered for the best copy of verses, appeared to reflect discredit and ridicule in whatever way it was viewed.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

November 4th, 1812.

I had the pleasure of receiving your obliging letter, dated the 23rd October, but was unwilling to intrude an answer upon you until something *important* should cast up; and the occasion is now furnished by the tremendous 'Critique upon Lord Byron's Address,' which I enclose under this and another cover. You declined writing the address originally, because "you would not contend with all Grub Street;" but you did not suspect, at that time, that success would induce all Grub Street to contend *against* you; but this is the present state of the case. You will have seen by the *Chronicle* of yesterday that it is in contemplation to collect and publish, in one volume, the whole of the Rejected Addresses, which would be an excellent subject of fun for an article in the *Review*, and Mr. Gifford would, I think, join forces with you.

I shall be careful to give you full notice of the new edition of 'Childe Harold,' which has been very much assisted in sale by the admiration forced from the ragamuffins who are abusing the Address. I would be delighted if you had a new poem ready for publication about the same time that Walter Scott is expected; but I will sacrifice my right arm (your Lordship's friendship) rather than publish any poem not equal to 'Childe Harold' without a conscriptive command, like that which I lately executed in committing your portrait to the flames; but I had some consolation in seeing it ascend in sparkling brilliancy to Parnassus. Neither Mr. Gifford nor I, I can venture to assure you, upon honour, have any notion who the author of the admirable article on 'Horne Tooke' is.

I ever remain,

Your Lordship's faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

P.S.—I do not mention 'Waltzing,' from the hope that it improves geometrically as to the time that it is retained.

The fit of inspiration was now on Lord Byron. In May 1813 appeared 'The Giaour,'\* and in the midst of his corrections of successive editions of it, he wrote in four nights his second Turkish Story 'Zuleika,' afterwards known as 'The Bride of Abydos.'

"The 'Bride,'" says Byron, "was written in four nights to distract my dreams from . . . Were it not thus, it had never been composed; and had I not done something at that time, I must have gone mad by eating my own heart—bitter diet!" "No one has seen it," he writes in his Diary, "but Hodgson and Mr. Gifford." "Hodgson likes it better than 'The Giaour,' but nobody else will,—and he never liked the 'Fragment.' I am sure, had it not been for Murray, *that* never would have been published, though the circumstances, which are the groundwork, make it . . . heigh-ho!"

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 25th, 1813.

MY DEAR LORD,

Some time ago I mentioned that I had sent the fifth Edition of 'The Giaour' to Mr. Gifford. I did not expect him to touch it except for the purpose of sending it to our reviewer, who has totally disappointed us. I called to-day upon Mr. G., and as soon as a gentleman who was present had gone, and he was ready to begin your business, he fell back in his largest armchair, and exclaimed, "Upon my honour, Murray, Lord Byron is a most extraordinary man. The new edition of his poem contains passages of exquisite—extraordinary beauty (I recollect now that he said they astonished him)—equal to anything that I have ever read.

\* With respect to the passage in which the lines occur—

"Though in Time's record it was nought,  
It was eternity in thought,"

Lord Byron told Mr. Murray that he took this idea from one of the Arabian tales—that in which the Sultan puts his head into a butt of water, and, though it remains there for only two or three minutes, he imagines that he lives many years during that time. The story had been quoted by Addison in the *Spectator*.

What is he about? Will he not collect all his force for one immortal work? His subject is an excellent one. We never had descriptions of Eastern manners before. All that has been hitherto attempted was done without actual knowledge." I told him that Moore was writing an Eastern story. "Moore," said he, "will do only what has been already done, and he is incapable of writing anything like Lord Byron." Mr. Gifford spoke too of the vigour of all your additions. Speaking of Scott, he said you did not interfere with each other, but that he had completely settled in his mind your certain superiority or genius of a higher order. I told him how rejoiced I was to hear him speak thus of you, and added that I knew you cherished his letter to you. He again deplored your wanderings from some great object, and regretted that you would not follow his recommendation of producing something worthy of you; for, highly as he thinks of your talents in both poems, and I believe most particularly in the last, still he thinks you have by no means stretched your pinions to the full, and taken the higher flight to which they are equal. I would apologise to you for detailing what *superficially* appears mere praise; but I am sure you will go deeper into the subject, and see in it my anxiety after your fame alone.

In our *next* number there will be an able review of the FIFTH Edition, though the *Edinburgh Review* had anticipated our extracts. At Madame de Staël's yesterday, you were the subject of much conversation, with Sir James Mackintosh and Conversation Sharp. Sir James asked and was astonished at the number of copies sold of 'The Giaour,' and a lady (not very young though) took away a copy of 'The Giaour' by the talismanic effect of the enclosed card. Do me the kindness to tell me when you propose to return. I am *at Home* for the remainder of the season, and until the termination of all seasons, and am,

Your faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

The 'Bride of Abydos' appeared at the beginning of December 1813. While it was in the press Mr. Murray sent a copy to Mr. Frere, whose opinion he thus conveyed to the author.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

November, 1813.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am so very anxious to procure the best criticism upon the 'Bride,' that I ventured last night to introduce her to the protection of Mr. Frere. He has just returned, quite delighted; he read several passages to Mr. Heber as exquisitely beautiful. He says there is a simplicity running through the whole that reminds him of the ancient ballad. He thinks it equal to anything you have produced. I asked if it was equal to the 'Giaour;' he said that the 'Giaour' contained perhaps a greater number of splendid passages, but that the mind carries something to *rest upon* after rising from the 'Bride of Abydos.' It is more perfect. He made one or two remarks. He says that such words as Gul and Bulbul, though not unpoetical in themselves, are in bad taste, and ought not to receive the sanction of your Lordship's example. In the passage, stanza ix. pp. 12-13, which Mr. Frere thought particularly fine, he thinks that the dimness of sight occasioned by abstraction of mind is rendered less complete by defining the fatal stroke as *right* sharply dealt.

With respect to the business arrangement as to the two poems, Mr. Murray wrote to Lord Byron as follows:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

November 18th, 1813.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am very anxious that our business transactions should occur frequently, and that they should be settled immediately; for short accounts are favourable to long friendships.

I restore 'The Giaour' to your Lordship entirely, and for it, the 'Bride of Abydos,' and the miscellaneous poems intended to fill up the volume of the small edition, I beg leave to offer you the sum of One Thousand Guineas; and I shall be happy if you perceive that my estimation of your talents in my character of a man of business is not much under my admiration of them as a man.

I do most heartily accept the offer of your portrait, as

the most noble mark of friendship with which you could in any way honour me. I do assure you that I am truly proud of being distinguished as your publisher, and that I shall ever continue,

Your Lordship's faithful Servant.

JOHN MURRAY.

With reference to the foregoing letter we read in Lord Byron's 'Diary,'—

"Mr. Murray has offered me one thousand guineas for 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos.' I won't. It is too much: though I am strongly tempted, merely for the say of it. No bad price for a fortnight's (a week each) what?—the gods know. It was intended to be called poetry."

In a letter to Mr. Murray (Nov. 17, 1813), Lord Byron writes,—

"Before I left town for Yorkshire, you said that you were ready and willing to give five hundred guineas for the copyright of 'The Giaour;' and my answer was—from which I do not mean to recede—that we would discuss the point at Christmas. The new story may or may not succeed; the probability, under present circumstances, seems to be that it may at least pay its expenses: but even that remains to be proved, and till it is proved one way or the other, we will say nothing about it. Thus, then, be it: I will postpone all arrangement about it, and 'The Giaour' also, till Easter, 1814; and you will then, according to your own notions of fairness, make your own offer for the two. At the same time, I do not rate the last, in my own estimation, at half 'The Giaour;' and according to your own notions of its worth and its success within the time mentioned, be the addition or deduction to or from whatever sum may be your proposal for the first, which has already had its success."

The 'Bride of Abydos' was received with almost as much applause as the 'Giaour.' "Lord Byron," said Sir James Mackintosh, "is the author of the day; six thousand of his 'Bride of Abydos' have been sold within a month."



'The Corsair' was Lord Byron's next poem, written with great vehemence, literally "struck off at a heat," at the rate of about two hundred lines a day,—“a circumstance,” says Moore, “that is, perhaps, wholly without a parallel in the history of genius.” ‘The Corsair’ was begun on the 18th, and finished on the 31st of December, 1813.

A sudden impulse induced Lord Byron to present the copyright of this poem also to Mr. Dallas, with the single stipulation that he would offer it for publication to Mr. Murray, who eventually paid Mr. Dallas five hundred guineas for the copyright, and the work was published in February 1814. The following letters will give some idea of the reception it met with.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

February 3rd, 1814.

MY LORD,

I have been unwilling to write until I had something to say, an occasion to which I do not always restrict myself. I am most happy to tell you that your last poem *is*—what Mr. Southey's is called—a *Carmen Triumphale*. Never, in my recollection, has any work, since the “Letter of Burke to the Duke of Bedford,” excited such a ferment—a ferment which I am happy to say will subside into lasting fame. I sold, on the day of publication,—a thing perfectly unprecedented—10,000 copies; and I suppose thirty people, who were purchasers (strangers), called to tell the people in the shop how much they had been delighted and satisfied. Mr. Moore says it is masterly,—a wonderful performance. Mr. Hammond, Mr. Heber, D'Israeli, every one who comes,—and too many call for me to enumerate—declare their unlimited approbation. Mr. Ward was here with Mr. Gifford yesterday, and mingled his admiration with the rest. Mr. Ward is much delighted with the unexpected charge of the Dervis—

“Up rose the Dervis, with that burst of light,”

and Gifford did what I never knew him do before—he

repeated several passages from memory, particularly the closing stanza,—

“ His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known.”

Indeed, from what I have observed, from the very general and unvarying sentiment which I have now gathered, the suffrages are decidedly in favour of this poem in preference to the ‘Bride of Abydos,’ and are even now balancing with ‘The Giaour.’ I have heard no one pass without noticing, and without expressing regret at, the idea thrown out by your Lordship of writing no more for a considerable time. I am really marking down, without suppression or extension, literally what I have heard. I was with Mr. Shee this morning, to whom I had presented the poem; and he declared himself to have been delighted, and swore he had long placed you far beyond any contemporary bard; and, indeed, your last poem does, in the opinion of almost all that I have conversed with. I have the highest encomiums in letters from Croker and Mr. Hay; but I rest most upon the warm feeling it has created in Gifford’s critical heart. The versification is thought highly of indeed. After printing the poems at the end of the first edition, I transplanted them to ‘Childe Harold,’ conceiving that you would have the goodness to pardon this *ruse* to give additional impetus to that poem, and to assist in making it a more respectable thickness. I sent, previous to publication, copies to all your friends, containing the poems at the end; and one of them has provoked a great deal of discussion, so much so, that I expect to sell off the whole edition of ‘Childe Harold’ merely to get at it. You have no notion of the sensation which the publication has occasioned; and my only regret is that you were not present to witness it.

I earnestly trust that your Lordship is well: and with ardent compliments,

I remain, my Lord,  
Your obliged and faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

P.S.—I have very strong reasons to believe that the Bookseller at Newark continues to *reprint*—not altering the Edition—your early poems. Perhaps you would ascertain this fact.

With regard to the transference of some separate verses from the 'Corsair' to 'Childe Harold,' to which Mr. Murray alludes, Byron wrote on February 5: "On second and third thoughts the withdrawing the small poems from the 'Corsair' (even to add to 'Childe Harold') looks like shrinking and shuffling after the fuss made upon them by one of the Tories."

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

February, 1814.

MY LORD,

I have allowed myself to indulge in the pleasure I derived from the expression of your satisfaction, because I have anticipated the point upon which there was likely to be some uneasiness. As soon as I perceived the fuss that was made about certain lines, I caused them to be immediately reinstated; and I wrote on Saturday to inform you that I had done so. A conviction of duty made me do this. I can assure you, with the most unreserved sincerity, that 'Childe Harold' did not require the insertion of the lines which have made so much noise to assist its sale; but they made it still more attractive, and my sordid propensities got the better of me. I sold at once nearly a thousand copies of this new edition; and I am convinced, by the collected and unshaken opinions of the best critics, that it is just as certain of becoming a Classic, as Thomson or Dryden. What delights me is, that amidst the most decided applause, there is a constant difference as to which is the *best* of your poems. Gifford declared to me again, the other day, that you would last far beyond any poet of the present day. I tried him particularly as to Campbell, but he had not a doubt about the certainty of your passing him. Although, therefore, I may concur with you in feeling some little surprise at such unprecedented triumph over people's prejudices, yet I can differ, upon very solid reasons, from your notion of "temporary reputation." I declare that I have not heard one expression of disappointment or doubtful satisfaction upon reading 'The Corsair,' which bids fair to be the most popular of your poems. You cannot meet a man in the street who has not read or heard read 'The Corsair.'

The facsimile is restored to 'Childe Harold,' only 200 copies having been sent out without it. The poem on the 'Skull Cup' is introduced. I long to have the pleasure of congratulating your Lordship personally. Your noble conduct to a *schoolfellow* does not lessen the admiration with which I remain, &c.,

JOHN MURRAY.

While 'The Corsair' was in the press, Lord Byron dedicated it to Mr. Moore; and at the end of the poem he added 'Stanzas on a Lady Weeping.' When the work appeared with his name on the titlepage, he was attacked in the leading newspapers; and his life, his sentiments, and his works, were violently assailed. The *Courier* alleged of him that he had received large sums of money for his writings. Lord Byron was extremely galled by these attacks, and permitted Mr. Dallas to defend his character in the newspapers.

"I take upon me," said Mr. Dallas, "to affirm that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge, the profits of 'The Satire' were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' I have already publicly acknowledged, in the dedication of the new edition of my novels; and I now add my acknowledgment for that of 'The Corsair;' not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it, while yet unpublished. With respect to his two other poems, 'The Giaour' and 'The Bride of Abydos,' Mr. Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of those has ever touched his Lordship's hands, or been disposed of for his use."

Lord Byron himself said of this letter:—"Dallas had, perhaps, have better kept silence; but that was *his* concern, and as his facts are correct, and his motive not dishonourable to himself, I wished him well through it."

Mr. Murray also was desirous of contradicting the state-

ment published in the *Courier*, on different grounds. Byron had at first expressed his intention of giving the publisher the copyright of 'The Giaour,' though he afterwards consented to receive one thousand guineas for it and 'The Bride of Abydos.' But his subsequent transfer of this sum to Dallas, however galling to Mr. Murray, did not absolve the publisher from his agreement with Lord Byron.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

February 26th, 1814.

MY LORD,

You appeared to be so satisfactorily convinced that silence would be most becoming, that I wrote the note to Mr. Dallas late on Saturday evening, with the hope of preventing the publication of his letter. The meaning of the "expressions" pointed out by you in my note is, that having formerly told Mr. Gifford, Mr. Hammond, Mr. Frere, Mr. Ward, Mr. Canning, and many other of my friends, that you had given me the copyright of 'The Giaour,' and having had occasion subsequently to unsay this, it would be placing my assertions in a very doubtful light, if I allow it to be insinuated publicly that I am to pay nothing for this poem, or for 'The Bride of Abydos.' You do not seem to be aware that I feel as much bound by my promise to pay you a thousand guineas for the copyright of 'The Giaour' and 'Bride of Abydos' in May next, as I am by my bond to give Lord Sheffield £1000 for 'Gibbon.'

My expression to Madame de Staël was, not that I had actually "paid," but that I had "given" you 1000 guineas for these two poems, because it is as much as the 500 guineas for 'The Corsair,' which I am to pay in two, four, and six months; and I must confess that at the *time* I stated this circumstance to Madame de Staël, I was not aware of your liberal intentions with regard to this sum; for I did not then conceive it possible that you would have resumed your gift of 'The Giaour' to me, to bestow it on another; and, therefore, the explanation of that part of Mr. Dallas's letter which refers to me is, that although Lord Byron has not actually received anything for 'The

Giaour' and 'Bride,' yet I am under an engagement to pay him a thousand guineas for them in May.

But, as Mr. Dallas's letter was published, and as your Lordship appeared to approve of it, I said nothing; nor should I have said anything further if you had not commanded this explanation. I declare I think these things are very unworthy a place in your mind. Why allow "a blight on our blade" to prevent you from reaping and revelling in the rich and superabundant harvest of Fame, which your inspired labours have created? I am sure, my Lord, if you will give the matter reflection, my conduct towards you has uniformly been that of a very humble, but very faithful friend.

I have the honour to be,  
Your Lordship's obliged and obedient Servant,  
JOHN MURRAY.

The 'Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte,' which appeared in April 1814, was on the whole a failure. It was known to be Lord Byron's, and its publication was seized upon by the press as the occasion for many bitter criticisms, mingled with personalities against the writer's genius and character. He was cut to the quick by these notices, and came to the determination to buy back the whole of the copyrights of his works, and suppress every line he had ever written. On the 29th of April, 1814, he wrote to Mr. Murray:—

*Lord Byron to John Murray.*

April 29th, 1814.

I enclose a draft for the money; when paid, send the copyrights. I release you from the thousand pounds agreed on for 'The Giaour' and 'Bride,' and there's an end. . . . For all this, it might be well to assign some reason. I have none to give, except my own caprice, and I do not consider the circumstance of consequence enough to require explanation. . . . It will give me great pleasure to preserve your

acquaintance, and to consider you as my friend. Believe me very truly, and for much attention,

Yours, &c.

BYRON.

Mr. Murray was of course very much concerned at this determination. He appealed with good effect to his lordship's considerateness and good nature; and three days later, Lord Byron revoked his determination. To Mr. Murray, he wrote (1 May, 1814):—

"If your present note is serious, and it really would be inconvenient, there is an end of the matter; tear my draft, and go on as usual: in that case, we will recur to our former basis."

Before the end of the month, Lord Byron began the composition of his next poem 'Lara,' usually considered a continuation of 'The Corsair.' It was published conjointly with Mr. Rogers's 'Jacqueline.' "Rogers and I," said Lord Byron to Moore, "have almost coalesced into a joint invasion of the public. Whether it will take place or not, I do not yet know, and I am afraid 'Jacqueline' (which is very beautiful) will be in bad company. But in this case, the lady will not be the sufferer."

Murray wrote to Lord Byron as follows:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

MY LORD,

Mr. Rogers called to-day with his poem to be printed with yours. I send the first sheet of Gifford's copy of the proof. The rest I will get (if not to-day) to-morrow. Mr. Ward has read the proof, and admires the poem greatly. I suggested if it were not too *semblable*—he said it showed uncommon talent to exhibit the same portrait in so many lights.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

August 6th, 1814.

I am really grateful for your obliging sufferance of my desire to publish 'Lara;' for I am sure you know that the respect I bear you in every way would not have allowed me to do this without your consent. I had anticipated this, and had done everything *but* actually *deliver* the copies of 'Lara;' and the moment I received your letter, for for it I waited, I cut the last cord of my aerial work, and at this instant six thousand copies are gone! I have sent copies, I believe, to every one of your friends; and, without an exception, they are delighted, and their praise is most particularly and rootedly confirmed on a *second* perusal, which proves to them that your researches into the human heart and character are at once wonderful and just. Mr. Frere likes the poem greatly, and particularly admires the first canto. I mentioned the passage in the second canto—descriptive of the morning after the battle, which delighted me so much, and indeed Mr. Wilmot and many other persons. His remark was that he thought it rather too shocking. This is perhaps a little fastidious. Sir Jno. Malcolm, whom I have not seen since, called to express his satisfaction; and by the way, I may add that Mr. Frere has been here this moment to take another copy with him to read again in his carriage. He told me that Mr. Canning liked it equally. Mr. Frere, and in his report, Mr. Canning, are the only persons who have spoken in praise of 'Jacqueline'; but they say it is beautiful, and this is a host. There is an obvious tendency to disparage 'Jacqueline,' but I think it is unjust and will be overcome.

Against the formidable attack upon my advertisement, I feel "perfectly secure." Imprimis, the words are Gifford's. In the second place, Mr. Frere denies that they are not grammar, and in the third place no other person has noticed them, and those to whom I suggested the alleged incorrectness agree that they can be noticed only by fastidiousness and hypercriticism of friendship. Who, in such a poem, would stop for a moment at a word in the preface? Moreover, here is *Johnson* for you, and (thank God) for your publisher, who, now that his author is found



out to be Dryden, is I suppose to be treated like Tonson, but to Johnson :

That (1) not this

(2) which ; relating to an antecedent thing—

“The mark *that* is set before him.”—PERKINS.

“The time *that* clogs me.”—SHAKESPEARE.

“Bones *that* hasten to be so.”—COWLEY.

“Judgment *that* is equal.”—WILKINS.

Are you answered ?

Mr. Merivale is here, and subscribes to the opinion in favour of *that*.

I felt more about the publication of these lines than I could express, and therefore I said nothing. It was most shameful to print at all, but with the name it was villanous. I saw them only in the *Chronicle*, and I rejoice that they did not originate with our friend Perry—they spoil that tone of harmony towards your Lordship which had been so powerfully struck into the public mind by Jeffrey ; everybody thinks highly of the talent of the article in the *E. R.*, and is in accord with its sentiments throughout.

I must remain some days yet to watch the progress of the demand for ‘Lara ;’ and therefore, as I could not attend my family to Scotland, I rather think of going to Paris first, and afterwards to the North. You do not tell me, and perhaps cannot, the time of your return. I have now deciphered the last part of your note, made obscure by the erasure of some valuable remarks, and rejoice that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you in town next week.

JOHN MURRAY.

The two poems were published anonymously in the following August (1814) : Murray allowing 500 guineas for the copyright of each. The conjunction of the two produced some fairish jokes.

“A friend of mine,” Lord Byron wrote to Moore, “was reading ‘Larry and Jacquy’ in a Brighton coach. A passenger took up the book, and queried as to the author.

The proprietor said there were *two*—to which the answer of the unknown was, ‘Ay, ay, a joint concern, I suppose, *summat* like Sternhold and Hopkins!’”

Lord Byron now contemplated a collection of his works, ‘Lara’ completing the series, an intention to which the postscript of the following letter refers :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

Brighton.

MY DEAR LORD,

I enclose a letter, not without most serious compunctions, which shall not be excited upon any similar occasion. I rejoice to hear that you are yet making improvements upon ‘The Giaour.’ It is a series of gems that well deserve the finest polish.

We are rather dull here, though the place is quite full, for the Prince Regent’s appearance or behaviour either prevented from coming, or drove away from the place, all respectable people. He was more outrageously dissipated the short time he was here than ever, and he has sunk into the company of the vilest of his former associates, Lord Barrymore, &c.

Some Sheffield has been so good as to invite me to pass some days at his house, where I shall go on Wednesday, in case you have occasion to write.

I dine to-day with three of my authors, D’Israeli, Prince Hoare and Northcote.

I am ever, &c.

JOHN MURRAY.

P.S.—I am advancing in the *Fourth* volume of the Works, which will consist of: ‘Ode to Buonaparte,’ ‘Poems at end of Childe Harold,’ ‘Poems at end of Corsair,’ ‘Death of Sir P. Parker,’ and anything unpublished.

## CHAPTER XI.

## MR. MURRAY'S REMOVAL TO 50 ALBEMARLE STREET.

WE must now revert to the beginning of 1812, at which time Mr. William Miller, who commenced business in Bond Street in 1791, and had in 1804 removed to 50, Albemarle Street, desired to retire from "the Trade." He communicated his resolve to Mr. Murray, who had some time held the intention of moving westward from Fleet Street, and had been on the point of settling in Pall Mall. Murray at once entered into an arrangement with Miller, and in a letter to Mr. Constable of Edinburgh he observed :—

*John Murray to Mr. A. Constable.*

May 1st, 1812.

"You will probably have heard that Miller is about to retire, and that I have ventured to undertake to succeed him. I had for some time determined upon moving, and I did not very long hesitate about accepting his offer. I am to take no part of his stock but such as I may deem expedient, and for it and the rest I shall have very long credit. How far it may answer, I know not ; but if I can judge of my own views, I think it may prove an advantageous opening. Miller's retirement is very extraordinary, for no one in the trade will believe that he has made a fortune ; but from what he has laid open to me, it is clear that he has succeeded. In this arrangement, I propose of course to dispose of my present house, and my medical works, with other parts of my business. I have

two offers for it, waiting my decision as to terms. . . . I am to enter at Miller's on the 29th of September next."\*

The terms arranged with Mr. Miller were as follows : The lease of the house, No. 50, Albemarle Street, was purchased by Mr. Murray, together with the copyrights, stock, &c., for the sum of £3822 12s. 6d.; Mr. Miller receiving as surety, during the time the purchase money remained unpaid, the copyright of 'Domestic Cookery,' of the *Quarterly Review*, and the one-fourth share in 'Marmion.' The debt was not finally paid off until the year 1821.

The year after this arrangement had been completed, and after Mr. Murray had entered into possession of the premises, we find Miller making a claim upon his successor for "a copy of every work that he should publish." This was a preposterous application, and Murray repudiated any such arrangement.

*John Murray to Mr. Wm. Miller.*

August 12th, 1813.

"I should be glad to know upon what grounds you can require the fulfilment of an 'honorary contract' who could sit down and in cold blood write your farewell demands upon your best customers without mentioning the name of your successor; though he but a few days before had paid you a sum that went far towards securing the comfort of your future existence. The fact is, Miller, I have never received from you any one act of friendship since I purchased your house, when you appeared

\* The Fleet Street business was eventually purchased by Thomas and George Underwood. It appears from the 'Memoirs of Adam Black,' that Black was for a short time a partner with the Underwoods. But on the latter requiring double the money that had been agreed upon when the formal deed of partnership was drawn up, Adam Black quitted the business in 1813. Upon the failure of the Underwoods in 1831, Mr. Samuel Highley, son of Mr. Murray's former partner, took possession, and the name of Highley again appeared over the door.

to leave me to my fate,—never entering the door, as was remarked by the common porter, except for your own convenience. Your ‘goodwill’ has never produced me one hundred pounds, and the books which you said ‘were you upon your deathbed, as my friend, you would advise me to take,’ will prove a considerable loss. . . . It was neither my wish nor my intention to have replied to your letter to me, because that letter was, in my opinion unnecessary; and because the explanations which it provoked were not calculated to make us better friends. But as you appear so much to desire an answer, you now have an answer. I will only add that the terms of our future acquaintance shall be regulated entirely by your own feelings.”

The step which Murray had taken was so momentous and the responsibility so great, that at times he was driven almost to the verge of despondency. On the other hand it was much more convenient for him to have his place of business near to the residences of his principal contributors and editor, for Gifford lived near at hand, in James Street, Buckingham Gate.

The *Quarterly* was gradually rising in importance, and taking position as the leading political and literary review. The circulation was gradually creeping up; new editions of the early numbers were called for, and the remuneration of the editor was doubled,—an evidence of no small importance as to the success of the periodical.

Amongst the miscellaneous works which Mr. Murray published shortly after his removal to Albemarle Street, were William Sotheby’s translation of the ‘Georgics of Virgil’—the most perfect translation, according to Lord Jeffrey, of a Latin classic which exists in our language; Robert Bland’s ‘Collection from the Greek Anthology’; Prince Hoare’s ‘Epochs of the Arts’; Lord Glenbervie’s work on the ‘Cultivation of Timber’; Granville Penn’s ‘Bioscope, or Dial of Life explained’; John Herman

Merivale's 'Orlando in Roncesvalles'; and Sir James Hall's splendid work on 'Gothic Architecture.' Besides these, there was a very important contribution to our literature—in the 'Miscellaneous Works of Gibbon' in 5 volumes, for the copyright of which Mr. Murray paid Lord Sheffield the sum of £1000. Mr. Murray's publications were not confined to any special branches of literature, but he was always careful to accept only such works as possessed intrinsic worth of their own.

About this time Murray had the honour of making the acquaintance of Sir John Malcolm, and he retained the friendship of that most able, genial, and popular of men to the end of his life. In 1812 he published Malcolm's 'Sketch of the Sikhs,' and in the following year Mr. Macdonald Kinneir's 'Persia.' Mr. D'Israeli also brought out the continuation of his 'Curiosities of Literature.' The 'Calamities of Authors' appeared in 1812, and Murray forwarded copies of the work to Scott and Southey.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

July 2nd, 1812.

"I owe you best thanks for the 'Calamities of Authors,' which has all the entertaining and lively features of the 'Amenities of Literature.' I am just packing them up with a few other books for my hermitage at Abbotsford, where my present parlour is only 12 feet square, and my book-press in Liliputian proportion. Poor Andrew Macdonald I knew in days of yore, and could have supplied some curious anecdotes respecting him. He died of a poet's consumption, viz. want of food.

"The present volume of 'Somers' \* will be out immediately; with whom am I to correspond on this subject since the secession of Will. Miller? I shall be happy to hear you have succeeded to him in this department, as well as in Albemarle Street. What has moved Miller

\* Lord Somers' 'Tracts,' a new edition in 12 volumes.

to retire? He is surely too young to have made a fortune, and it is uncommon to quit a thriving trade. I have had a packet half finished for Gifford this many a day."

Southey expressed himself as greatly interested in the 'Calamities of Authors,' and proposed to make it the subject of an article for the *Quarterly*.

*Mr. Southey to John Murray.*

August 14th, 1812.

"I should like to enlarge a little upon the subject of literary property, on which he has touched, in my opinion, with proper feeling. Certainly I am a party concerned. I should like to say something upon the absurd purposes of the Literary Fund, with its despicable ostentation of patronage, and to build a sort of National Academy in the air, in the hope that Canning might one day lay its foundation in a more solid manner.\* And I could say something on the other side of the picture, showing that although literature in almost all cases is the worst trade to which a man can possibly betake himself, it is the best and wisest of all pursuits for those whose provision is already made, and of all amusements for those who have leisure to amuse themselves. It has long been my intention to leave behind me my own Memoirs, as a post-obit for my family—a wise intention no doubt, and one which it is not very prudent to procrastinate. Should this ever be completed, it would exhibit a case directly in contrast to D'Israeli's view of the subject. I chose literature for my own profession, with every advantage of education it is true, but under more disadvantages perhaps of any other kind than any of the persons in his catalogue. I have never repented the choice. The usual censure, ridicule, and even calumnies, which it has drawn on me never gave me a moment's pain; but on the other hand, literature has given me friends; among the

\* Canning had his own opinion on the subject. When the Royal Society of Literature was about to be established, an application was made to him to join the committee. He refused, for reasons "partly general, partly personal." He added, "I am really of opinion, with Dr. Johnson, that the multitudinous personage, called The Public, is after all, the best patron of literature and learned men."

best and wisest and most celebrated of my contemporaries it has given me distinction. If I live twenty years longer, I do not doubt that it will give me fortune, and if it pleases God to take me before my family are provided for, I doubt as little that in my name and in my works they will find a provision. I want to give you a 'Life of Wesley.' The history of the Dissenters must be finished by that time, and it will afford me opportunity."

Southey's 'Life of Nelson,' expanded from the *Quarterly* article, had now come out, and was received with general admiration. Southey himself said, "I like the 'Life of Nelson' well enough to be glad that I have written it." He told Murray that Croker had sent him a very flattering opinion of it, and had "communicated some valuable facts for improving it in a second edition, if it should have the fortune to reach one." "The entire book will arrive tomorrow, and I shall then have the greatest and last joy of an author—that of seeing his work for the first time as a whole, and in its printed form."

In the course of the following year Southey proposed to Murray to write the 'History of the Peninsular War.' His connection with the *Edinburgh Annual Register* had now ceased, and he thought it better to erect a finished building for himself than to rest content with preparing materials for others. Murray was pleased with Southey's proposal, and consulted Gifford on the subject, who cordially approved. Accordingly Murray offered 1000 guineas for the work to Southey, who shortly afterwards made a visit to London to collect materials, and on his return to Keswick wrote as follows:—

*Mr. Southey to John Murray.*

November 27th, 1813.

"Here then I am once more at my desk, with my books and papers about me, right glad to return to that



*rest in labour* which I have taken for my motto, because in it I find my happiness. The winter is before me. I shall have no interruptions from without, and please God that I have none from within, my progress in this campaign will be to my heart's content, and as rapid as you could wish."

He then proceeded to enumerate the books he required both for his 'History of the Peninsular War' and for 'The Book of the Church;' and added that he proposed to send for the *Quarterly* articles on 'The Nicobar Islands,' 'The Copyright Question,' and Montgomery's 'World before the Flood.'

Mr. Murray had arranged with the African Association to publish Mungo Park's last 'Travels in Africa,' and to pay £1200 for the copyright, but on finding that the most important part of the travels had been published, without his knowledge, in the 'Annals of Philosophy,' he wrote to the managers expostulating with them and withdrawing his offer.

"You will be fully sensible," he said in his letter, "that this premature publication has ruined completely my edition of Mr. Park's Journal, of which Isaaco's voyage forms as essential a part, as the fifth act does to a play; and I am confident that the justice of the managers of the African Association will immediately release me from an engagement which has been thus most unfortunately violated."

The following letter to John Whishaw, Esq., Lincoln's Inn, Secretary to the African Association, gives a further account of the transaction:—

*John Murray to Mr. Whishaw.*

November 9th, 1814.

"'Isaaco's Journal' was always an important part of my calculation, and this importance to me is not only from its addition which enables me to form the papers into a saleable volume, but as the 'Journal of a Native

African,' written in the Arabic language by himself, and containing the result of his travels into the same countries visited by Mr. Park, and presenting to the public the early authentic circumstances collected on the spot by this lamented traveller, it promised to create an interest with the world nearly as great as Mr. Park's work itself. Hence it has always been an object of primary moment to the success of the publication. The anticipatory publication of Isaaco's paper has not only deprived me of all this benefit, but has destroyed the largest part of the rest of the speculation. I did not offer £1200 on the idea that the present papers of Mr. Park were, like his former travels, of that intrinsic value that they would be saleable and popular on their own merit—unfortunately they are not—but both the Society and I know that Mr. Park's disappearance had left an anxious curiosity in the public to know what had really become of him. This feeling is now gratified. 'Isaaco's Journal,' containing all this information, has been published without my knowledge and contrary to my expectation and contract, in one of the most popular and respectable journals of the day, which goes to every part of the country. The circumstances as to the last scene of Mr. Park's life have been extracted into almost all the newspapers, and thus every one knows what I meant no one to be informed of except from my book. All the sale from this popular curiosity is therefore gone.

"Thus circumstanced, I submit to the Institution that it is impossible that £1200 copyright can be given for the work, and therefore I trust that they will see the equity of rescinding the contract altogether, and leaving both parties as they stood before it was made. If the work is worth that, other booksellers may be applied to. If the value of the work is destroyed or diminished, I submit most respectfully that I ought not to be injured who have in no respect contributed to the act which has produced the injury. I have only to add that the same principles which urged me at first to offer so considerable a sum will induce me to co-operate in any new arrangement for the benefit of Mr. Park's family, and I should be happy in any early opportunity of conversing upon this subject."

The volume was accordingly published by the African Association at their offices in Lincoln's Inn, though it

afterwards came into Mr. Murray's hands, as will be seen from future correspondence.

During the year 1813 the recklessness of the younger Ballantyne, combined with the formation of the incipient estate at Abbotsford, were weighing heavily on Walter Scott. This led to a fresh alliance with Constable, "in which," wrote Scott, "I am sensible he has gained a great advantage;" but in accordance with the agreement Constable, in return for a share in Scott's new works, was to relieve the Ballantynes of some of their heavy stock, and in May Scott was enabled "for the first time these many weeks to lay my head on a quiet pillow." But nothing could check John Ballantyne. "I sometimes fear," wrote Scott to him, "that between the long dates of your bills and the tardy settlements of the Edinburgh trade, some difficulties will occur even in June; and July I always regard with deep anxiety." How true this forecast proved to be is shown by the following letter:—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, 5th July, 1813.

I delayed answering your favour, thinking I could have overtaken the 'Dæmonology' for the *Review*, but I had no books in the country where it found me, and since that Swift, who is now nearly finished, has kept me incessantly labouring. When that is off my hand I will have plenty of leisure for reviewing, though you really have no need of my assistance. The volume of 'Somers' being now out of my hands I take the liberty to draw at this date as usual for £105. Now I have a favour to ask which I do with the more confidence because, if it is convenient and agreeable to you to oblige me in the matter, it will be the means of putting our connection as author and publisher upon its former footing, which I trust will not be disagreeable to you. I am making up a large sum of money to pay for a late purchase, and as part of my funds is secured on an heritable bond which cannot be exacted till

Martinmas, I find myself some hundreds short, which the circumstances of the money market here renders it not so easy to supply as formerly. Now if you will oblige me by giving me a lift with your credit and accepting the enclosed bills,\* it will accommodate me particularly at this moment, and as I shall have ample means of putting you in cash to replace them as they fall due, will not, I should hope, occasion you any inconvenience. Longmans' house on a former occasion obliged me in this way, and I hope found their account in it. But I entreat you will not stand on the least ceremony should you think you could not oblige me without inconveniencing yourself. The property I have purchased cost about £5,000, so it is no wonder I am a little out for the moment. Will you have the goodness to return an answer in course of post, as, failing your benevolent aid, I must look about elsewhere.

You will understand distinctly that I do not propose that you should advance any part of the money by way of loan or otherwise, but only the assistance of your credit, the bills being to be retired by cash remitted by me before they fall due.

Believe me, very truly,  
Your obedient Servant,  
WALTER SCOTT.

Mr. Murray at once replied :—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

July 8th, 1813.

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure of returning accepted the bills which I received from you this morning. In thus availing myself of your confidential application, I trust that you will do me the justice to believe that it is done for kindness already received, and not with the remotest view towards prospective advantages. I shall at all times feel proud of being one of your publishers, but this must be allowed to arise solely out of your own feelings and convenience when the occasions shall present themselves. I am sufficiently content in the belief that even negative obstacles to our perfect confidence have now subsided.

\* Three bills for £300 each at three, four, and six months respectively.

When weightier concerns permit we hope that you will again appear in our *Review*. In confidence I may tell you that your long silence led us to avail ourselves of your friend Mr. Rose's offer to review Ferriar,\* and his article is already printing.

I will send you a new edition of the 'Giaour' in which there are one or two stanzas added of peculiar beauty.

I trust that your family are well, and remain, dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Within a few months of this correspondence, Scott was looking into an old writing-desk† in search of some fishing-tackle, when his eye chanced to light upon the Ashestiel fragment of 'Waverley,' begun several years before. He read over the introductory chapters, and then determined to finish the story. It is said that he first offered it anonymously to Sir R. Phillips, London, who refused to publish it. 'Waverley' was afterwards accepted by Constable & Company, and published on half profits, on the 7th of July, 1814. When it came out, Murray got an early copy of the novel; he read it, and sent it to Mr. Canning, and wrote upon the title-page, "By Walter Scott." The reason why he fixed upon Scott as the author was as follows. When he met Ballantyne at Boroughbridge, in 1809, to settle some arrangements as to the works which Walter Scott proposed to place in his hands for publication, he remembered that among those works were three—1st, an edition of 'Beaumont and Fletcher'; 2nd, a poem; and 3rd, a novel. Now, both the edition of 'Beaumont and Fletcher' (though edited by Weber) and the poem, the 'Lady of the Lake,' had been published; and now, at last,

\* Dr. Ferriar on 'Apparitions.'

† This writing-desk was given, after Sir Walter's death, to the wife of his friend Daniel Terry, and by her to her brother James Nasmyth, by whom it was bequeathed, in 1890, to John Murray, junior.

appeared *the novel*.\* He was confirmed in his idea that Walter Scott was the author after carefully reading the book. Canning called on Murray next day; said he had begun it, found it very dull, and concluded: "You are quite mistaken; it cannot be by Walter Scott." But a few days later he wrote to Murray: "Yes, it is so; you are right: Walter Scott, and no one else."

In the midst of his labours and anxieties, Scott had not forgotten Gifford and the *Quarterly Review*.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, January 6th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,

I had quite forgot the unaccepted bill, which I took it for granted was returned to Edinburgh; but on calling at Sir W. Forbes's they told me the proceeds were at my credit with them, which is quite as broad as it is long, so you may depend on having it with interest, etc., two days before it falls due.

I am just now labouring to bring 'Swift' to a close, as Constable is not unreasonably very desirous to have it out. I trust to correct the last proof this month, and then I have not much to do, and I will turn to reviewing to make up leeway, but above all to please Gifford who has reason to complain of me. I think I shall be in town in spring, unless the state of Holland is such as to tempt me to go there, which I should like very much—but this is all contingent. If the roads were safe for a non-combatant I would endeavour to reach the camp of the allies, providing Lord Aberdeen were there, who is an old friend.

As to subjects of reviews, I have a very curious American book of great humour, on which I have long meditated an article, as it is quite unknown in this country, and the quotations are very diverting; I should have done this at

\* Indeed, in Ballantyne & Company's printed list of 'New Works and Publications for 1809-10,' issued August 1810 (now before us), we find the following entry: "Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since; a novel in 3 vols. 12mo." The work was not, however, published until July 1814.

Abbotsford, but there I had no amanuensis, and here I have no time for the old growling Dean of St. Patrick's. I will also try the 'Calamities of Authors,' but was it not reviewed before? I can say little excepting in addition to the history of MacDonald and Heron, both of whom I knew; the former was a man of high genius, the latter a mere sot and beast—both were starved to death.

I have read Lord Byron's 'Bride of Abydos' with great delight, and only delay acknowledging the receipt of a copy from the author till I can send him a copy of the 'Life of Swift.' Is he in town at present?

Yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

Scott's next letter is interesting as bearing witness to a fact which even Scott himself would appear to have overlooked in later years. In his diary for June 10, 1827, we read: "A good thought came into my head to write stories for little Johnnie Lockhart from the history of Scotland like those taken from the history of England." Now it is obvious from the following letter that the idea had presented itself to his mind twenty years earlier; that the 'Letters of a Father' gave place to 'Tales of a Grandfather' is probably due to the brilliant fresh career which was, at the earlier date, first opening itself to the author of 'Waverley.'

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Abbotsford, October 20th, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

The dissensions of you great potentates of literature in the case of 'Marmion' was the only reason of my not proposing to you to be a sharer in 'The Lord of the Isles.' From personal regard I would willingly have given you (were you to think it as like to prove advantageous) the share you wish, but you know how disagreeable it is to be involved in disputes among one's publishers which you cannot accommodate. In casting about how I might show you some mark of my sense of former kindness, a certain

MS. History of Scotland in 'Letters to My Children' has occurred to me which I consider as a desideratum; it is upon the plan of 'Lord Littleton's Letters,' as they are called. A small experimental edition might be hazarded in spring without a name, not that I am anxious upon the score of secrecy, but because I have been a great publisher of late. About this I shall be glad to speak with you, and I am happy to find I shall have an opportunity of seeing you at this place on Wednesday or Thursday next week, which will give me great pleasure, as I want to hear about Ellis and Gifford, but especially about Lord Byron.

Yours very faithfully,

WALTER SCOTT.

Mr. Lockhart makes a passing allusion to these Letters, but doubts if any portion of them were actually written. The following passage, however, would seem to show that the work had advanced further than Mr. Lockhart was aware of.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Saturday, Piccadilly, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

I regret your accident much, of which I only learned the extent from the papers. I hope you will soon get well, and I am heartily sorry I cannot bid you good-bye in person. I intend to revise my letters on 'Scottish History' for you, but I will not get to press till November, for the country affords no facilities for consulting the necessary authorities. I hope it may turn out a thing of some interest, though I rather intend to keep to its original purpose as a book of instruction to children.

Yours very truly,

W. SCOTT.

In the autumn of 1814 Mrs. Murray went to Leith by sailing-ship from the Thames, to visit her mother and friends in Edinburgh. She was accompanied by her son John and her two daughters. During her absence,



Mr. Murray wrote to her two or three times a week, and kept her *au courant* with the news of the day. In his letter of the 9th of August he intimated that he had been dining with D'Israeli, and that he afterwards went with him to Sadler's Wells Theatre to see the 'Corsair,' at which he was "woefully disappointed and enraged. . . . They have actually omitted his wife altogether, and made him a mere ruffian, ultimately overcome by the Sultan, and drowned in the New River!"

Mr. Blackwood, of Edinburgh, was then in London, spending several days with Mr. Murray over their accounts and future arrangements. The latter was thinking of making a visit to Paris, in the company of his friend D'Israeli, during the peace which followed the exile of Napoleon to Elba. D'Israeli had taken a house at Brighton, from which place the voyagers intended to set sail, and make the passage to Dieppe in about fourteen hours. On the 13th of August, Mr. Murray informs his wife that, "Lord Byron was here yesterday, and I introduced him to Blackwood, to whom he was very civil. They say," he added, "that Madame de Staël has been ordered to quit Paris, for writing lightly respecting the Bourbons." Two days later he said :—

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

Aug. 15th, 1814.

"I dined yesterday with D'Israeli, and in the afternoon we partly walked and partly rode to Islington, to drink tea with Mrs. Lindo, who, with Mr. L. and her family, were well pleased to see me. Mr. Cervetto was induced to accompany the ladies at the piano with his violoncello, which he did delightfully. We walked home at 10 o'clock. On Saturday we passed a very pleasant day at Petersham with Turner and his family. . . .

"I have got at last Mr. Eagle's 'Journal of Penrose, the Seaman,' for which, as you may remember, I am to pay

£200 in twelve months for 1000 copies : too dear perhaps ; but Lord Byron sent me word this morning by letter (for he borrowed the MS. last night) : ‘Penrose is most amusing. I never read so much of a book at one sitting in my life. He kept me up half the night, and made me dream of him the other half. It has all the air of truth, and is most entertaining and interesting in every point of view.’”

Of course Mr. Murray could not fail to refer to Gifford, his constant adviser in all literary matters, but Gifford was then rendered almost incapable of work by his close attendance on his faithful housekeeper Nancy, who was dying at the cottage he had taken for her accommodation at Ryde, in the Isle of Wight. Mr. Murray writes to Mrs. Murray, in Edinburgh :—

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

Aug. 22nd, 1814.

“I have just seen Mr. Gifford again to-day, and find that we are really so backward with our number—owing to his constant attendance on his dying housekeeper, at Ryde, where he was at length forced to leave her, without the slightest hope of recovery—that we have got almost every article to give out ; and it will be impossible for me to leave town until I can see this important business in some decided train for arrangement. If this detain me long, I shall begin seriously to think of postponing my journey to Paris ; and as I must go to Scotland, this latter excursion will occupy as much time as I can or ought to allow, with so many important works upon my hands. . . .

“My mind is overgrown with weeds, and I have not courage to pluck them out. Blackwood dines here to-day, and sails to-morrow in the *Lord Wellington*.”

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

Aug. 24th, 1814.

“I went down to the wharf of the old Shipping Company yesterday, to see Blackwood off in the *Lord Wellington* ; and I cannot describe to you the regret and vexation

which I suffered at finding her one of the most beautiful, commodious, and sweet vessels that I ever entered—half as large again as the one you went in. I am convinced that, if you had gone in her, you would not have suffered one-third of the inconvenience you experienced from the vile pestiferous vessel in which you unfortunately sailed. You know we looked at several for Miss Crombie, but there did not appear to be a pin to choose between them. But the *Lord Wellington* is as different from any of these as our present house and situation are from those we left in Fleet Street. . . .

“Lord Byron set out for Newstead on Sunday. It is finally settled to be his again, the proposed purchaser forfeiting £25,000. ‘Lara’ and ‘Jacqueline’ are nearly sold off, to the extent of 6000, which leaves me £130, and the certain sale of 10,000 more in the 8vo. form. Mr. Canning called upon Gifford yesterday, and from their conversation I infer very favourably for my *Review*. We shall now take a decided tone in Politics, and we are all in one boat. Croker has gone down to the Prince Regent, at Brighton, where I ought to have been last night, to have witnessed the rejoicings and splendour of the Duke of Clarence’s birthday. But I am ever out of luck. ‘O, indolence and indecision of mind! if not in yourselves vices, to how much exquisite misery do you frequently prepare the way!’ Have you come to this passage in ‘Waverley’ yet? Pray read ‘Waverley’; it is excellent.”

Aug. 29th, 1814.

“I believe I told you,” he adds, “that my *Review* is likely to be all the better for the proposed change in affairs; and that the higher persons are more heartily disposed towards it. Mr. Canning goes to Lisbon after visiting the Lakes. I have now sold the whole of the 6000 of ‘Lara’; Longman, who took 500 at first, sent for 250 more on Saturday. After a time I will print it alone, and hope to sell at least 10,000 more. Tell Blackwood, by a short note, to ship for me 250 of his, if he finds them not certain of immediate sale, as I have not one copy left.”

On the 5th September, 1814, Mr. Murray communicated with Mrs. Murray as to the education of his son John, then six-and-a-half years old :—

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

"I am glad that you venture to say something about the children, for it is only by such minutiae that I can judge of the manner in which they amuse or behave themselves. I really do not see the least propriety in leaving John, at an age when the first impressions are so deep and lasting, to receive the rudiments and foundation of his education in Scotland. If learning English, his native language, mean anything, it is not merely to read it correctly and understand it grammatically, but to speak and pronounce it like the most polished native. But how can you expect this to be effected, even with the aid of the best teachers, when everybody around him, with whom he can practise his instructions, speaks in a totally different manner. No! I rather think it better that he should go to Edinburgh after he has passed through the schools here, and when he is sixteen or seventeen. He should certainly go to some school next spring, and I most confidently trust that you are unremitting in your duty to give him daily lessons of preparation, or he may be so far behind children of his age when he does go to school, that the derision he may meet there may destroy emulation. All this, however, is matter for serious consideration and for future consultation, in which your voice shall have its rightful influence. . . .

"I am in distress at not being able to find some letters of Dr. Brewster to me, written in 1813, particularly one which contains his proposal about Robison's works, by which I expect to lose *certainly* £500. He and Blackwood have got me into this scrape.\* I am in constant correspondence with my friend Lord Sheffield, who has invited me again to visit him. Lord Byron offers to send me game, and Lady Caroline Lamb has again invited me

\* Robison's 'Mechanical Philosophy.' This work consisted of the articles by Dr. Robison on the "Steam Engine," principally published in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' edited by Dr. Brewster, with an Introduction by James Watt. Dr. Brewster required £800 for the copyright. Murray thought this too much, as the greater portion of the work had already been published in a popular form. Eventually Mr. Murray consented to give £500 for the first edition, and £300 more should a second edition be called for.

to dine at Brocket to meet Mr. Wilmot,\* who, I am glad to find, speaks well of me."

Mr. Murray was under the necessity of postponing his visit to France. He went to Brighton instead, and spent a few pleasant days with Mr. D'Israeli and his friends.

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

Sept. 14th, 1814.

"I pass my time with the D'Israelis, with whom I board altogether, and they are very kind to me. I have now settled finally not to go to France, and Mr. D'Israeli puts up with the disappointment, which it certainly is both to him and Mrs. D'I., with more than good humour, and even lays it upon himself. . . .

"I have had such a letter from Mrs. Rundell, accusing me of neglecting her book,† stopping the sale, &c. Her conceit surpasses everything; but, as she again desires the *Reviews* to be sent to her, she shall have them, with a little truth in a moderate dose of remonstrance from me."

On the 24th of September Mr. Murray, having returned to London, informed his wife, still at Edinburgh, of an extraordinary piece of news.

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

"I was much surprised to learn from Dallas, whom I accidentally met yesterday, that Lord Byron was expected in town every hour. I accordingly left my card at his house, with a notice that I would attend him as soon as he pleased; and it pleased him to summon my attendance about seven in the evening. He had come to town on business, and regretted that he would not be at Newstead until a fortnight, as he wished to have seen me there on my way to Scotland. Says he, 'Can you keep a secret?' 'Certainly—positively—my wife's out of town!' 'Then—I am going to be MARRIED!' 'The devil! I shall have no poem this winter then?' 'No.' 'Who is the lady who is to do me this injury?' 'Miss Milbanke—do you know her?' 'No, my lord.'

"So here is news for you! I fancy the lady is rich,

\* Afterwards Wilmot Horton.

† 'Domestic Cookery.'

noble, and beautiful; but this shall be my day's business to enquire about. Oh! how he did curse poor Lady C—— as the fiend who had interrupted all his projects, and who would do so now if possible. I think he hinted that she had managed to interrupt this connexion two years ago. He thought she was abroad, and, to his torment and astonishment, he finds her not only in England, but in London. He says he has written some small poems which his friends think beautiful, particularly one of eight lines, his very best—all of which, I believe, I am to have; and, moreover, he gives me permission to publish the octavo edition of 'Lara' with his name, which secures, I think, £700 to you and me. So Scott's poem is announced ['Lord of the Isles'], and I am cut out. I wish I had been in Scotland six weeks ago, and I might have come in for a share. Should I apply for one to him, it would oblige me to be a partner with Constable, who is desperately in want of money. He has applied to Cadell and Davies (the latter told me in confidence), and they refused."

Sept. 26th, 1814.

"The instance which you mention brings very forcibly to my mind the loss which I have sustained by not keeping up my Scotch literary connexion, which I shall have much difficulty in revivifying. Had I been earlier in the field I cannot help thinking that Scott would have given me a share in his poem, which nevertheless I meditate to write to him about. Lord Byron sent me yesterday a hare and two brace of partridges; I was glad to send half of the latter to Gifford for his housekeeper, who is still very ill."

At the beginning of October Mr. Murray went down to Nottingham for the purpose of visiting Newstead Abbey, Lord Byron having written to his steward to prepare for his reception. From Nottingham he writes to Mrs. Murray:—

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

Nottingham, Oct. 3rd, 1814.

"Here I am, writing to you amidst the din of 30,000 people who are employed in making stockings for nearly

half as many millions. Moreover, I have been walking for two hours amongst some 30,000 well-dressed lads and lasses who have assembled at an immense fair held to-day in a market-place as large as Smithfield. It was really delightful to me, in the state of bachelorism to which you have reduced me, to come in contact with so many neat, healthy, and innocent damsels; but, when I add that there was not one amongst them who possessed the attractions of either your intellect or beauty, your alarm will yield to astonishment. Luckily for me, I have a letter from Lord Byron to his steward. I stopped at his inn, as otherwise it would have been impossible to have obtained either bed or board, for the town is four times full and offers one of the most interesting sights I have seen in the whole course of my travels. I arrived at 3 o'clock, sent off my letter to Newstead by post, and wrote on the back that I should be there to-morrow before 10."

The following is Mr. Murray's account of his visit to Newstead. His letter is dated Matlock, 5th October, 1814:—

"I got to Newstead about 11 o'clock yesterday and found the steward, my namesake, and the butler waiting for me. The first, who is good-looking and a respectable old man of about sixty-five years, showed me over the house and grounds, which occupied two hours, for I was anxious to examine everything. But never was I more disappointed, for my notions, I suppose, had been raised to the romantic. I had surmised the possibly easy restoration of this once famous abbey, the mere skeleton of which is now fast crumbling to ruin. Lord Byron's immediate predecessor stripped the whole place of all that was splendid and interesting; and you may judge of what he must have done to the mansion when I inform you that he converted the ground, which used to be covered with the finest trees, like a forest, into an absolute desert. Not a tree is left standing, and the wood thus shamefully cut down was sold in one day for £60,000. The hall of entrance has about eighteen large niches, which had been filled with statues, and the side walls covered with family portraits and armour. All these have been mercilessly torn

down, as well as the magnificent fireplace, and sold. All the beautiful paintings which filled the galleries—valued at that day at £80,000—have disappeared, and the whole place is crumbling into dust. No sum short of £100,000 would make the place habitable. Lord Byron's few apartments contain some modern upholstery, but serve only to show what ought to have been there. They are now digging round the cloisters for a traditionary cannon, and in their progress, about five days ago, they discovered a corpse in too decayed a state to admit of removal. I saw the drinking-skull\* and the marble mausoleum erected over Lord Byron's dog. I came away with my heart aching and full of melancholy reflections—producing a lowness of spirits which I did not get the better of until this morning, when the most enchanting scenery I have ever beheld has at length restored me. I am far more surprised that Lord Byron should ever have lived at Newstead, than that he should be inclined to part with it; for, as there is no possibility of his being able, by any reasonable amount of expense, to reinstate it, the place can present nothing but a perpetual memorial of the wickedness of his ancestors. There are three, or at most four, domestics at board wages. All that I was asked to taste was a piece of bread-and-butter. As my foot was on the step of the chaise, when about to enter it, I was informed that his lordship had ordered that I should take as much game as I liked. What makes the steward, Joe Murray, an interesting object to me, is that the old man has seen the abbey in all its vicissitudes of greatness and degradation. Once it was full of unbounded hospitality and splendour, and now it is simply miserable. If this man has feelings—of which, by the way, he betrays no symptom—he would possibly be miserable himself. He has seen three hundred of the first people in the county filling the gallery, and seen five hundred deer disporting themselves in the beautiful park, now covered with stunted offshoots of felled trees. Again I say it gave me the heartache to witness all this ruin, and

\* When the present Mr. Murray was a student in Edinburgh, he wrote to his father (April 10, 1827)—“I saw yesterday at a jeweller's shop in Edinburgh a great curiosity, no less than Lord Byron's skull cup, upon which he wrote the poem. It is for sale; the owner, whose name I could not learn (it appears he does not wish it known), wants £200 for it.



I regret that my romantic picture has been destroyed by the reality."

One of Mr. Murray's first duties on arriving at Edinburgh was to write to Lord Byron, and inform him of his visit to Newstead, and of the kindness with which he had been received by his steward and butler. He had also to convey to him the esteem in which his works were held across the border.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

"You will not be dissatisfied to learn how much you are esteemed by Dugald Stewart and his accomplished wife; they dined with me at my mother's, and were minute in their enquiries about you, and vehement in their commendation. Ballantyne gave me a full account of the delightful manner in which Scott speaks of you. In one of his letters he says, 'I want to hear about Ellis and Gifford, but especially about Lord Byron.' I am neither chagrined nor vain at my spurious importance; but I do assure your lordship that I am very proud to see so completely realized all that my own mind and heart have felt for you."

Among the friends that welcomed Mr. Murray to Edinburgh was Mr. William Blackwood, who then, and for a long time after, was closely connected with him in his business transactions. Blackwood was a native of Edinburgh; having served his apprenticeship with Messrs. Bell & Bradfute, booksellers, he was selected by Mundell & Company to take charge of a branch of their extensive publishing business in Glasgow. He returned to Edinburgh, and again entered the service of Bell & Bradfute; but after a time went to London to master the secrets of the old book trade under the well-known Mr. Cuthill. Returning to Edinburgh, he set up for himself in 1804, at the age of twenty-eight, at a shop in South Bridge Street

—confining himself, for the most part, to old books. He was a man of great energy and decision of character, and his early education enabled him to conduct his correspondence with a remarkable degree of precision and accuracy. Mr. Murray seems to have done business with him as far back as June 1807, and was in the habit of calling upon Blackwood, who was about his own age, whenever he visited Edinburgh. The two became intimate, and corresponded frequently; and at last, when Murray withdrew from the Ballantynes, in August 1810, he transferred the whole of his Scottish agency to the house of William Blackwood. In return for the publishing business sent to him from London, Blackwood made Murray his agent for any new works published by him in Edinburgh. In this way Murray became the London publisher for Hogg's new poems, and 'The Queen's Wake,' which had reached its fourth edition.

During his visit to Edinburgh, he snatched a day to run out to Kinneil House,\* near Boroughstoney, to see his relative and correspondent, Professor Dugald Stewart. After his return to Edinburgh, Mrs. Stewart wrote to him:—

*Mrs. Stewart to John Murray.*

"Next time you visit Scotland we must not be put off with a single day, but have a comfortable visit." And with respect to literature she adds: "You, who live in novelties, can scarcely imagine the happiness a new book gives to us. We talk of it all day, and dream of it all night. It is only in that respect that the town is so superior to the country. Judge, then, how much obliged we are to any kind friend who allows us such a luxury."

\* Kinneil House is memorable as the place behind which, in the outhouse, Watt erected his first condensing steam engine for Dr. Roebuck, who then occupied the place. It was also the house in which Dugald Stewart wrote his 'Philosophy of the Human Mind.'

Another visit which Mr. Murray paid at this time was to Mr. Scott, at Abbotsford. Towards the end of 1814, Scott had surrounded the original farmhouse with a number of buildings—kitchen, laundry, and spare bedrooms—and was able to entertain company. He received Murray with great cordiality, and made many enquiries as to Lord Byron, to whom Murray wrote on his return to London :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

“Walter Scott commissioned me to be the bearer of his warmest greetings to you. His house was full the day I passed with him ; and yet, both in corners and at the surrounded table, he talked incessantly of you. Unwilling that I should part without bearing some mark of his love (a poet’s love) for you, he gave me a superb Turkish dagger to present to you, as the only remembrance which, at the moment, he could think of to offer you. He was greatly pleased with the engraving of your portrait, which I recollected to carry with me ; and during the whole dinner—when all were admiring the taste with which Scott had fitted up a sort of Gothic cottage—he expressed his anxious wishes that you might honour him with a visit, which I ventured to assure him you would feel no less happy than certain in effecting when you should go to Scotland ; and I am sure he would hail your lordship as ‘a very brother.’”

After all his visits had been paid, and he had made his arrangements with his printers and publishers, Mr. Murray returned to London with his wife and family. Shortly after his arrival he received a letter from Mr. Blackwood.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Nov. 8th, 1814.

“I was much gratified by your letter informing me of your safe arrival. How much you must be overwhelmed just now, and your mind distracted by so many calls upon your attention at once. I hope that you are now in one of your best frames of mind, by which you are enabled, as

you have told me, to go through, with more satisfaction to yourself, ten times the business you can do at other times. While you are so occupied with your great concerns, I feel doubly obliged to you for your remembrance of my small matters."

After referring to his illness, he proceeds :—

"Do not reflect upon your visit to the bard (Walter Scott). You would have blamed yourself much more if you had not gone. The advance was made by him through Ballantyne, and you only did what was open and candid. We shall be at the bottom of these peoples' views by-and-by; at present I confess I only see very darkly—but let us have patience; a little time will develop all these mysteries. I have not seen Ballantyne since, and when I do see him I shall say very little indeed. If there really is a disappointment in not being connected with Scott's new poem,\* you should feel it much less than any man living—having such a poet as Lord Byron. Since I was a little better I have been again reading 'Lara,' and the delight it afforded me was exquisite. The very incongruities which a number of our small critics have been nibbling at, afforded me the highest enjoyment. . . . After the strong and kind interest Lord Byron has uniformly displayed to you, and the warmth and strength of his friendship, you may consider yourself a proud man indeed."

Although Mr. Murray did not secure a share in Scott's new poem, he succeeded in obtaining a share in 'Don Roderick,' one of Scott's former poems, which he was about to reprint with considerable additions. When communicating with Murray on the subject, Scott said :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

"The property is with the Ballantynes, but, as I have an interest in it, I have desired them to offer you a third of the impression at the same terms as the other two publishers, as I think it will suit your sale better than any of

\* This was 'The Lord of the Isles,' to which Murray had not been admitted as a partner by Ballantyne, though an understanding to that effect existed between the firms.

them, and as I would be happy to have your name on the title-page."

The offer was accordingly made by the Ballantynes, and at once accepted.

Meanwhile the *Quarterly* continued to prosper, in spite of the irregularity of its appearance, and its circulation had increased to about seven thousand. Murray himself took the principal share in the correspondence. He beat up for new recruits, and regularly communicated with the old contributors. He tried again and again to induce Walter Scott to write more articles for the *Review*. We find him urging an article on Weber's Romances.

"I trust," he said, "that you have been prevented only by business. Is 'Self-Control' worthy of any review from you? It is rising into notice here, and perhaps you might like a subject that will not cost you much trouble. We are anxious for 'Don Roderick,' and wish one copy instantly for the *Review*."

Southey addressed all his letters and communications to Murray himself, and not to the editor. He greatly resented Gifford's so-called "mutilations" of his articles, and often threatened to break away from the *Quarterly*. But the hundred guineas an article were more than he could resist, and he went on contributing regularly.

"I could get more money from the *Quarterly*," he wrote to Miss Barker, "by one month's employment than this volume (the second volume of 'History of Brazil') will produce me; but, on the other hand, this is for myself and posterity."

On another occasion Southey wrote to his friend Bedford:—

"The more I consider the matter about emancipating myself from any engagement which subjects me to the

control of an editor, the more I perceive and feel the fitness of so doing ; and regarding it, as I ought to do, without any feeling of anger, I shall consult my own perfect convenience in the matter, and leave the Murraymagne to discover that I find other modes of composition more agreeable, if not more profitable."

At that time Southey was occupied with 'The Tale of Paraguay' and 'Oliver Newman,' both of which are now forgotten.

Croker, Barrow, Dr. Whittaker, and Dr. Young were always to be depended upon, and they were not so particular as Southey in being controlled by the editor. Croker wrote to Murray :—

November 1st, 1812.

DEAR MURRAY,

I have now done my 'Sketch of Brougham' ; and as soon as I have got the whole in print I will endeavour to curtail and reduce into some kind of order, for Mr. Gifford's final correction.

With respect to Croker's article on Brougham, Gifford informed the publisher, "that at the suggestion of Mr. Canning, he proposes the postponement of the article on Brougham's speech," and it does not appear that it was ever published. In a subsequent letter to Mr. Murray he says :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

"If we could do without such men as Southey and Mr. Ellis, perhaps it might be possible to act differently ; but at any rate I prefer Mr. Canning to William Erskine. You are to consider that we have not *hacks in pay* like the *Monthly* and *Critical Review*, and that we are at least dealing with gentlemen. Spleen and ill-humour are out of place."

Of Southey he said :—

"Southey's prose is so good that everyone detects him. But take care how you confess it. *Mum* is always the

safest word. When S. comes to town, let him do as he pleases."

During the summer months, when the June number of the *Quarterly* was published, Gifford, as usual, went down to Ryde to regain his own health and look after his dying housekeeper.

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

Ryde, July 12th, 1813.

"I have certainly gained something like health since I have been here, and I live all day long either on or by the water. Dr. Bell is here on a short visit, and contrived to find me out. He has been with me every day to take me out with some or other of his acquaintances; but as I positively came here to hide myself away, I have steadily refused to be known to any of them."

July 29th, 1813.

"I have, as you conjecture, been touring—don't make a mistake and read 'towering,' for my flights have been very humble, or rather none at all. The fact is, that I can do nothing here. Mr. Croker is very kind, and as we are both fond of sailing, we are much on the water together."

In the following month he said that he was again suffering from a bad cough. Murray had sent him some present—what it was is not specified—to which Gifford replies:—

"You are too kind and munificent to me. I thank you very heartily, which is all you will allow me to do."

While at Ryde Gifford received from Murray the news of the battle of Vittoria, and replied:—

"This seems to me the most important victory yet gained, and promises to free Spain. What a turn it would give to the affairs of the Allies if they could hear of it in time; but Buonaparte will be at least three weeks before them." He added: "'Coleman' I see advertised. Would you have me try to get at Croker once more? If the book be worth

reviewing he is the only person to do it, and I will write to him."

Croker reviewed 'Coleman's Vagaries' in the eighteenth number, which was due in July, but did not appear until six weeks later.

In January 1814 Gifford wrote to Murray :—

"In one of his letters Lord Sheffield talks of my visiting him. If his lordship would give me his estate, I could not venture on such a thing; nor can I increase my stock of acquaintance, as I never go out. Though I am better, yet I have not breath enough to walk out."

After his usual visit to Ryde he returned to London in the autumn. We find him writing to Murray, then in Edinburgh :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

James Street, October 20th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,

What can I say in return for your interesting and amusing letter? I live here quite alone, and see nobody, so that I have not a word of news for you. I delight in your visit to Scotland, which I am sure would turn to good, and which I hope you will, as you say, periodically repeat. It makes me quite happy to find you beating up for recruits, and most ardently do I wish you success. Mention me kindly to Scott, and tell him how much I long to renew our wonted acquaintance. Southey's article is, I think, excellent. I have softened matters a little. Barrow is hard at work on Flinders [*Q. R.* 23]. I have still a most melancholy house. My poor housekeeper is going fast. Nothing can save her, and I lend all my care to soften her declining days. She has a physician every second day, and takes a world of medicines, more for their profit than her own, poor thing. She lives on fruit, grapes principally, and a little game, which is the only food she can digest. Guess at my expenses; but I owe in some measure the extension of my feeble life to her care through a long succession of years, and I would cheerfully divide my last farthing with



her. I will not trouble you again on this subject, which is a mere concern of my own ; but you have been very kind to her, and she is sensible of it.

With respect to this worthy woman, it may be added that she died on the 6th of February, 1815, carefully waited on to the last by her affectionate master. She was buried in South Audley Street Church, Grosvenor Square, where Gifford erected a tomb over her, and placed on it a very touching epitaph, concluding with these words : " Her deeply-affected master erected this stone to her memory, as a faithful testimony of her uncommon worth, and of his gratitude, respect, and affection for her long and meritorious services." \*

\* See *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1816. Hazlitt published a cruel and libellous pamphlet in 1819, entitled 'A Letter to William Gifford,' in which he hinted that some improper connection had subsisted between himself and his "frail memorial." Hazlitt wrote this pamphlet because of a criticism on the 'Round Table' in the *Quarterly*, which Gifford did not write, and of a criticism of Hunt's 'Rimini,' published by Mr. Murray, which was also the work of another writer. But Gifford never took any notice of these libellous attacks upon him. He held that secrecy between himself and the contributors to the *Quarterly* was absolutely necessary. Hazlitt, in the above pamphlet, also attacks Murray, Croker, Canning, Southey, and others whom he supposed to be connected with the *Review*.

## CHAPTER XII.

MURRAY'S DRAWING-ROOM—BYRON AND SCOTT—WORKS  
PUBLISHED IN 1815.

DURING Mrs. Murray's absence in Edinburgh, the dwelling-house at 50 Albemarle Street was made over to the carpenters, painters and house decorators. "I hope," said Mr. Murray to his wife, "to leave the drawing-room entirely at your ladyship's exclusive command." But the drawing-room was used for other purposes than the reception of society callers. It became for some time the centre of literary friendship and intercommunication at the West End. In those days there was no Athenæum Club for the association of gentlemen known for their literary, artistic, or scientific attainments. That institution was only established in 1823, through the instrumentality of Croker, Lawrence, Chantrey, Sir Humphry Davy and their friends. Until then, Murray's drawing-room was the main centre of literary intercourse in that quarter of London. Men of distinction, from the Continent and America, presented their letters of introduction to Mr. Murray, and were cordially and hospitably entertained by him; meeting, in the course of their visits, many distinguished and notable personages.

In these rooms, young George Ticknor, from Boston, in America, then only twenty-three, met Moore, Campbell, D'Israeli, Gifford, Humphry Davy, and others, early in 1815. He thus records his impressions of Gifford:—

"Among other persons, I brought letters to Gifford, the satirist, but never saw him till yesterday. Never was I so mistaken in my anticipations. Instead of a tall and handsome man, as I had supposed him from his picture—a man of severe and bitter remarks in conversation, such as I had good reason to believe him from his books, I found him a short, deformed, and ugly little man, with a large head sunk between his shoulders, and one of his eyes turned outward, but withal, one of the best-natured, most open and well-bred gentlemen I have ever met. He is editor of the *Quarterly Review*, and was not a little surprised and pleased to hear that it was reprinted with us, which I told him, with an indirect allusion to the review of 'Inchiquen's United States.' . . . He carried me to a handsome room over Murray's book-store, which he has fitted up as a sort of literary lounge, where authors resort to read newspapers, and talk literary gossip. I found there Elmsley, Hallam, Lord Byron's 'Classic Hallam, much renowned for Greek,' now as famous as being one of his lordship's friends, Boswell, a son of Johnson's biographer, &c., so that I finished a long forenoon very pleasantly." \*

Croker and Barrow were both frequenters of the drawing-room, being constant contributors to and ardent supporters of the *Quarterly*. Croker had already made his mark in literature by his poem on 'Talavera,' which had gone to a ninth edition, and which, Mr. Murray informed him, "had been more successful than any poem that I know, exceeding in circulation Mr. Heber's 'Palestine' or 'Europe,' or even Mr. Canning's 'Ulm' and 'Trafalgar.'" This was however, before the appearance of Lord Byron's poems. Scott wrote to Croker: "Many a heart has kindled at your 'Talavera,' which may be the more patriotic for the impulse as long as it shall last." With respect to his contributions to the *Quarterly*, Croker, who was then in full work as Secretary to the Admiralty, wrote to Murray on sending his

\* 'Life, Letters, and Journal of George Ticknor,' i. 48.

review of Miss Edgeworth's works : "Whatever you may think of my literary merits, if you could be aware of the circumstances of incessant and *accablant* business and fatigue in which I have written this review, you would at least thank me for my diligence and perseverance."

Madame de Staël, who had been driven from Switzerland and France by the tyranny of Napoleon, was an occasional frequenter of Murray's drawing-room. H. Crabb Robinson says in his Diary (i. 416) :—

"I called this morning on Madame de Staël at 3 George Street, Hanover Square. It is singular that, having in Germany assisted her as a student of philosophy, I should now render her service as a lawyer. Murray, the bookseller, was with her, and I assisted at drawing up the agreement for her forthcoming work on Germany, for which she is to receive 1500 guineas."

To one of his relatives, Murray wrote at the end of 1813 :—

"I have lately ventured on the bold step of quitting the old establishment to which I have been so long attached, and have moved to one of the best, in every respect, that is known in my business, where I have succeeded in a manner the most complete and flattering. My house is excellent ; and I transact all the departments of my business in an elegant library, which my drawing-room becomes during the morning ; and there I am in the habit of seeing persons of the highest rank in literature and talent, such as Canning, Frere, Mackintosh, Southey, Campbell, Walter Scott, Madame de Staël, Gifford, Croker, Barrow, Lord Byron, and others ; thus leading the most delightful life, with means of prosecuting my business with the highest honour and emolument."

It was in Murray's drawing-room that Walter Scott and Lord Byron first met. They had already had some friendly intercourse by letter and had exchanged gifts, but in the early part of 1815 Scott was summoned to London

on matters connected with his works. Mr. Murray wrote to Lord Byron on the 7th of April :—

“Walter Scott has this moment arrived, and will call to-day between three and four, for the chance of having the pleasure of seeing you before he sets out for Scotland. I will show you a beautiful caricature of Buonaparte.”

Lord Byron called at the hour appointed, and was at once introduced to Mr. Scott, who was in waiting. They embraced each other in the most affectionate manner, and entered into a cordial conversation. How greatly Mr. Murray was gratified by a meeting which he had taken such pains to bring about, is shown by the following memorandum carefully preserved by him :—

“1815. *Friday, April 7.*—This day Lord Byron and Walter Scott met for the first time and were introduced by me to each other. They conversed together for nearly two hours. There were present, at different times, Mr. William Gifford, James Boswell (son of the biographer of Johnson), William Sotheby, Robert Wilmot, Richard Heber, and Mr. Dusgate.”

The present Mr. Murray—then John Murray, Junior—gives his recollections as follows :—

“I can recollect seeing Lord Byron in Albemarle Street. So far as I can remember, he appeared to me rather a short man, with a handsome countenance, remarkable for the fine blue veins which ran over his pale, marble temples. He wore many rings on his fingers, and a brooch in his shirt-front, which was embroidered. When he called, he used to be dressed in a black dress-coat (as we should now call it), with grey, and sometimes nankeen trousers, his shirt open at the neck. Lord Byron’s deformity in his foot was very evident, especially as he walked downstairs. He carried a stick. After Scott and he had ended their conversation in the drawing-room, it was a curious sight to see the two greatest poets of the age—both lame—stumping

downstairs side by side. They continued to meet in Albemarle Street nearly every day, and remained together for two or three hours at a time. Lord Byron dined several times at Albemarle Street. On one of these occasions, he met Sir John Malcolm—a most agreeable and accomplished man—who was all the more interesting to Lord Byron, because of his intimate knowledge of Persia and India. After dinner, Sir John observed to Lord Byron, how much gratified he had been to meet him, and how surprised he was to find him so full of gaiety and entertaining conversation. Byron replied, ‘perhaps you see me now at my best.’ Sometimes, though not often, Lord Byron read passages from his poems to my father. His voice and manner were very impressive. His voice, in the deeper tones, bore some resemblance to that of Mrs. Siddons.”

About this time, Mr. Murray had a personal encounter with two thieves. While returning from Stoke Newington, across the fields, he was assailed by two ruffians, who knocked him down and robbed him of his money, but did not take his watch. His brother-in-law, Elliot, referred to this circumstance in a letter (June 27th, 1815).

“I was much alarmed by seeing in the newspapers that you had been knocked down and robbed of all your money (3*s.* 6*d.* in silver, and 4*d.* in copper coin). Fortunately, Annie’s (his sister) letter of the 16th arrived at same time, and informed me of your not having suffered much personal injury. The pecuniary loss will not ruin you. If you are always as moderate in your pocket-money, you will not be meddled with again.”\*

\* Lord Byron also wrote to Tom Moore of this robbery: “Murray,” he said, “has been cruelly cudgelled of misbegotten knaves, ‘in Kendal Green,’ at Newington, on his way home from a dinner, and robbed—would you believe it?—of three or four bonds of forty pounds a piece, and a seal ring of his grandfather’s, worth a million! This is his version,—but others affirm that D’Israeli, with whom he dined, knocked him down with his last publication, ‘The Quarrels of Authors,’ in a dispute about copyright. Be this as it may, the newspapers have teemed with his ‘*injuria formæ*,’ and he has been embrocated, and invisible to all but the apothecary ever since.”

Shortly before this first interview between Scott and Byron the news had arrived that Bonaparte had escaped from Elba, and landed at Cannes on the 1st of March, 1815. The French troops flocked to his standard, and Europe was again thrown into a state of excitement. Mr. Elliot continued, with reference to these events :

“ We are all in a state of delirium about the news from Brabant. We look anxiously for the English news. The *English Gazette* is more relied on than any State papers in Europe. As yet, we have no minute particulars but from Holland. We have to-day accounts of Bonaparte having left the army for Paris. . . . From the imperfect accounts which we have, it is thought that the English army was surprised ; as well as Blucher. You have no idea of the malignity with which this occasion is taken hold of, and how willingly it is supposed that the Duke of Brunswick fell a sacrifice to the errors of the others.”

When the news of the Battle of Waterloo reached London, Murray sent an account of it to his agent at Edinburgh. It was the first intelligence of the victory that Blackwood had received. In great triumph he showed Murray's letter about, to Walter Scott among the rest ; and then the Lord Provost confirmed the news.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

June 24th, 1815.

“ The whole town is in an uproar, and all the bells have been set a-ringing. One can think of nothing else to-day I met Walter Scott this forenoon, and read him your letter. He desired me to tell you that he hoped Mr. Hammond \* was not in a strait-waistcoat. He said a great many kind things about you. Everything is fixed about my going to Princes Street.”

A few days before—indeed on the day the battle was fought—Blackwood gave great praise to the new

\* Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, father of the late Lord Hammond.

number of the *Quarterly*, containing the contrast of Bonaparte and Wellington. It happened that Southey wrote the article in No. 25, on the 'Life and Achievements of Lord Wellington,' in order to influence public opinion as much as possible, and to encourage the hearts of men throughout the country for the great contest about to take place in the Low Countries. About the same time, Sir James Mackintosh had written an able and elaborate article for the *Edinburgh*, to show that the war ought to have been avoided, and that the consequences to England could only be unfortunate and inglorious. The number was actually printed, stitched, and ready for distribution in June; but it was thought better to wait a little, for fear of accidents, and especially for the purpose of using it instantly after the first reverse should occur, and thus to give it the force of prophecy. The Battle of Waterloo came like a thunderclap. The article was suppressed, and one on 'Gall and his Craniology' substituted. "I think," says Ticknor, "Southey said he had seen the repudiated article."\*

Lord Byron did not write another 'Ode on Napoleon.' He was altogether disappointed in his expectations. Nevertheless, he still, like Hazlitt, admired Napoleon, and hated Wellington. When he heard of the result of the Battle of Waterloo, and that Bonaparte was in full retreat upon Paris, he said, "I'm d——d sorry for it!"

There were still meetings in Murray's drawing-room, and literary banquets in Murray's dining-room. On the 22nd of June, 1815, Ticknor was present at one of the dinners. He says:—

"I dined with Murray, and had a genuine bookseller's dinner, such as Lintot used to give to Pope, and Gay and

\* 'Life, Letters, and Journals of George Ticknor' (2nd ed.) i. p. 41.



Swift, and Dilly to Johnson and Goldsmith. Those present were two Mr. Duncans, Fellows of New College, Oxford ; D'Israeli, author of the ' Quarrels and Calamities of Authors ' ; Gifford, and Campbell. The conversation of such a party could not be confined to politics, even on the day when they received full news of the Duke of Wellington's successes ; and, after they had drunk his health, and Blucher's, they turned to literary topics as by instinct, and from seven o'clock until twelve the conversation never failed or altered. D'Israeli, who, I think, is no great favourite, though a very good-natured fellow, was rather the butt of the party. The two Duncans were acute and shrewd in correcting some mistakes in his books. Gifford sometimes defended him, but often joined in the laugh ; and Campbell, whose spirits have lately been much improved by a legacy of £5000, was the life and wit of the party. He is a short, small man, and has one of the roundest and most lively faces I have seen amongst this grave people. His manners seemed as open as his countenance, and his conversation as spirited as his poetry. He could have kept us amused till morning ; but midnight is the hour for separating, and the party broke up at once." \*

Mr. Murray, about this time, began to adorn his dining-room with portraits of the distinguished men who met at his table. His portraits include those of Gifford,† by Hoppner, R.A. ; Byron and Southey, by Phillips ; Scott and Washington Irving, by Stewart Newton ; Croker, by Eddis, after Lawrence ; Coleridge, Crabbe, Mrs. Somerville, Hallam, T. Moore, Lockhart and others. In April 1815 we find Thomas Phillips, afterwards R.A., in communication with Mr. Murray, offering to paint for him a series of Kit-cat size at eighty guineas each, and in course of time his pictures, together with those of John Jackson, R.A., formed a most interesting gallery of the great literary men of the time, men and women of science, essayists, critics,

\* ' Life, Letters, and Journals of George Ticknor ' (2nd ed.) i. pp. 52-3.

† This portrait was not painted for Mr. Murray, but was purchased by him.

Arctic voyagers, and discoverers in the regions of Central Africa.

Byron and Southey were asked to sit for their portraits to Phillips. Though Byron was willing, and even thought it an honour, Southey pretended to grumble. To Miss Barker he wrote (9th November, 1815):—

“Here, in London, I can find time for nothing; and, to make things worse, the Devil, who owes me an old grudge, has made me sit to Phillips for a picture to Murray. I have in my time been tormented in this manner so often, and to such little purpose, that I am half tempted to suppose the Devil was the inventor of portrait painting.”

Meanwhile Mr. Murray was again in treaty for a share in a further work by Walter Scott. No sooner was the campaign of 1815 over, than a host of tourists visited France and the Low Countries, and amongst them Murray succeeded in making his long-intended trip to Paris, and Scott set out to visit the battlefields in Belgium. Before departing, Scott made an arrangement with John Ballantyne to publish the results of his travels, and he authorized him to offer the work to Murray, Constable, and the Longmans, in equal shares.

*Mr. Ballantyne to John Murray.*

July 27th, 1815.

“Mr. Walter Scott has left town to-day for the Continent, and proposes writing from thence a series of letters to supposititious correspondents, varied in matter and style according to the persons supposed to be addressed. This work is to form a demy 8vo. volume of twenty-two sheets, to sell at 12s. It is to be immediately begun on his arrival in France, and to be published, if possible, in the second week of September, when he proposes to return. His first visit is to the field of Waterloo, *viz* Brussels. We print 3000 of this, and I am empowered

to offer you one-third of the edition, Messrs. Longman and Messrs. Constable having each the same share. The terms twelve months' acceptance for paper and print in shipment, and half profits at six months, granted now, the bills payable to me. Mr. Scott only made up his mind to-day respecting this mode of disposal."

Mr. Murray had already reached Paris, when Ballantyne's letter arrived in Albemarle Street, but on his return he wrote to Ballantyne as follows:—

*John Murray to Mr. Ballantyne.*

August 12th, 1815.

"I have just arrived from the Continent, and find your favour of the 27th ult., upon the subject of Mr. Walter Scott's letters from the Continent. I have much pleasure in subscribing to the terms of your proposal for a third share of an edition, to consist of 3000 copies; and I now enclose my note, at six months from this date, of £150 accordingly, the receipt of which you can do me the favour to acknowledge at your leisure."

Mr. Murray's visit to Paris was of much interest. He set out with his friend, Mr. George Basevi, a nephew of Mr. D'Israeli, on the 14th of July, 1815, a month after the Battle of Waterloo. They reached Dover by coach, after a long and fatiguing journey. The packet was to sail on the following morning at eleven. The voyage was accomplished, with a favourable wind, in about two hours and a half, but the packet had to remain about two hours more outside the bar before it could enter Calais Harbour. At Calais, the companions hired a calèche on two wheels, with an apron of wood, and left for Paris on the following morning, making the journey by land in about three days.

Arrived at Paris, the travellers put up at the Hôtel des Étrangers, Rue Vivienne.

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

Paris, July 22nd, 1815.

“ We employed ourselves yesterday in delivering our letters of introduction. The first of those to whom our letters were addressed, who happened to be at home, was a respectable merchant, a friend of Mr. Basevi. From him we first learnt the state of anxious feeling here. The military of all nations, including our own, are billeted upon individuals, and all except the English, and of course the French, behave with greater or less humanity or moderation. The Prussians have been particularly outrageous in their demands; pillaging, devastating and destroying in the provinces, wherever they came, all that they cannot use or take away, even to burning the houses and inhabitants upon whom they had lived. This is truly horrible, and much to be lamented where such retribution falls upon the innocent; but even these ought to consider justly the cause of it, and then their indignation and curses must fall, not upon the allies, but upon their own villanous army. It is most gratifying—however justly I think this nation is at length made to feel the misery they have spread over Europe—to find that the torch of retributive justice has not been consigned to the arms of the British. Respecting their conduct, there is but one universal sentiment of admiration; their forbearance has been exemplary indeed and equal to their courage, and extends to the most inferior private. The officers, this gentleman assured us, when quartered upon him, never would dine with him, though their right, nor yield to repeated solicitation, except once or twice to show their respect, and they have invariably conducted themselves, as he expressed it, ‘*comme voyageurs*.’ This feeling towards the English is truly gratifying to us in a foreign country at such a juncture. Buonaparte had built a bridge here—the finest in Paris—to commemorate his victory over the Prussians at Jena; this the Prussians, with some justice, absolutely swore they would blow up, and no entreaties could preserve it. The delicate ingenuity of Lord Wellington, however, saved it. He simply ordered *one* British soldier to walk backwards and forwards on the bridge as sentinel, and upon no account

to quit it. The Prussians were confounded; they declared they could never destroy one English soldier. It is said, also, that the King, finding that nothing would move the determination of the Prussians, at length wrote to Blücher, saying that, as it must be so, he had only one favour to ask—that he would give him two hours' notice before it took place, that he might be prepared to place himself upon it. The Prussians are literally execrated by the French."

The visitors called upon Miss Helen Maria Williams, who afterwards wrote a book about France. They saw most of the sights of Paris; but the most important of these was a review of the British troops on the 24th of July, 1815. We quote Mr. Murray's own words in his letter to Mrs. Murray:—

"This whole day, from 10 o'clock, we have been at a review of the British Army before Lord Wellington, the Emperors of Russia and Austria, and the King of Prussia. The troops were five hours in passing, and are computed at 70,000 men, including Hanoverians, &c.—all that formed Lord Wellington's army. It will operate very usefully, I can see, upon this flighty and ignorant people, from the conversations I took care to place myself in the way of overhearing. They were, however, most completely astonished by the appearance of our cavalry; they had not previously any idea of them, really believing them to be contemptible. Hundreds around were vociferating *sacré dieu*; some of them said that they had been told that Paris had been delivered to us by the treason of Fouché, but now they saw the true cause. It was indeed a gratifying and triumphant sight for an Englishman. Our men are all such truly respectable fine fellows. The Duke had his carriage there with two ladies.

"I must now conclude hastily, as the carriage is come to take us to dinner. We know nothing whatsoever of politics here, nor do the Parisians yet know if Buonaparte be really taken.

"This will be carried by Capt. Herd, who is to put it into the Post Office."

The remainder of the visit passed off very pleasantly. Basevi revelled in the statues and pictures in the Louvre, and wished to study them more. The collection contained the finest pictures in the world—which Napoleon had brought from Italy, Germany, and Holland—as well as the principal statues, included the Venus de Medici, the Laocoon, the Apollo Belvedere, and others, which were soon to be returned to the galleries from which they had been taken. To oblige Basevi, Murray consented to stay a few days longer, during which time he delivered some letters of introduction from Sir James Mackintosh, all of which proved exceedingly valuable and interesting.

*John Murray to Mrs. Murray.*

“ We had a long conversation with Suard, the friend of Gibbon, a sensible and communicative, now old man, worn down by the horrors of the revolution, and by no means enlivened by the conduct of the allies, for the Prussians everywhere commit horrible depredations. We then saw Sismondi, who appears to have been completely fascinated by Carnot and Buonaparte, of whom he yet speaks with enthusiasm, though even he confesses that he was not since his return, by any means, the man of genius that he had been,—that he became lethargic, and that, when his councillors went to confer with him, they constantly found him asleep over some book. We then had an interview with Gérard, the most eminent painter here, with whose gallery and conversation we were much entertained, but I most particularly with the latter, in which I have since learnt he is allowed to excel. He was more rational in his politics and feelings, and blamed the French army as the just cause of all the present sufferings from the vengeance of some of the allies. From him we went to Benjamin Constant, the friend of Madame de Staël, a man who had lived in unceasing hatred of Buonaparte, but who unfortunately allowed himself to be seduced by the last change, and was employed by Carnot in framing the constitution. He is now the

ridicule of all. He was, however, in pretty good spirits, and received us very kindly ; we could not expect much politics from him, though he expressed a hope that the plague might carry off the allies."

After other visits—to Baron Humboldt amongst them—and several excursions in the neighbourhood of Paris—to Versailles, to Malmaison, the favourite residence of Josephine, and to St. Cloud—the pair of travellers set out from Paris to Dieppe on the 5th of August. They reached Dieppe after an exhausting journey by diligence, and embarked for Newhaven. The voyage across the Channel at that time occupied more than eighteen hours. Before returning to London they visited Mr. Isaac D'Israeli, who had been ill, and told him all the news of their pleasant excursions in and about Paris.

In the meantime Ballantyne, who was printing Scott's 'Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk,' wrote to Murray that, instead of 3000 copies, double the number, or 6000, had been thrown off, and requesting Murray to send him the bill for the additional amount, dated three months back, which was at once complied with.

Notwithstanding the commercial distress which prevailed during the early part of 1815, Mr. Murray continued increasingly busy in the publication of new works. He again undertook the publication of 'Mungo Park's Travels,' though a portion of the work had been published by the African Institution in Lincoln's Inn. Mr. Whishaw, in acknowledging the receipt from Mr. Murray of £400 for the copyright of the journals, added that "Sir Joseph Banks is much pleased with your conduct in waiving the objection arising from the publication of 'Isaaco's Journal,' and has looked out some other papers which may be useful for our purpose."

In a subsequent letter to Mr. Murray, Thomas Harrison, Secretary to the African Institution, says:—

“I have again the satisfaction of expressing to you the high sense which the Board cannot but feel at another instance of your liberal conduct respecting the family of the late Mungo Park, which I had the pleasure of reporting to them this morning.”

And Adam Park (Mungo's brother), then living at Gravesend, in acknowledging the receipt of the book, wrote (29th September, 1815):—

“The rapid sale of the first edition encourages me to hope that your candour and liberality towards the interests of my late brother's family will meet a commensurate reward from a generous public.”

Among the other miscellaneous works published this year was the ‘Paradise of Coquettes,’ originally issued anonymously, but now acknowledged to be by Dr. Thomas Brown, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, author of the ‘Philosophy of the Human Mind.’ The ‘Paradise of Coquettes’ excited a good deal of interest, one of the ablest critics declaring it to be “by far the best and most brilliant imitation of Pope that has appeared since the time of that great writer.” J. H. Merivale also published through Mr. Murray his ‘Orlando in Roncesvalles’—an imitation, or rather an abridgment, of a part of the ‘Morgante Maggiore.’ Mr. Murray's list included also Sir R. C. Hoare's ‘Antiquities of Wiltshire,’ Lord Woodhouselee's ‘Elements of History’ (being the text-book of his course as Professor of Universal History in the Edinburgh University), Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's ‘Letters,’ and Hamilton's ‘East India Gazetteer,’ a work amassed and digested with singular industry, and containing a vast treasury of



information. Lord Sheffield, in sending the publisher the receipt for £1000 for the copyright of Gibbon's miscellaneous works—which have already been referred to—wrote, "I have had more satisfaction in treating with you than with any other bookseller with whom I have had dealings."

In 1815 a very remarkable collection of documents was offered to Mr. Murray for purchase and publication. They were in the possession of one of Napoleon's generals, a friend of Miss Waldie.\* The collection consisted of the personal correspondence of Bonaparte, when in the height of his power, with all the crowned heads and leading personages of Europe, upon subjects so strictly confidential that they had not even been communicated to their own ministers or private secretaries. They were consequently all written by their own hands.

As regards the contents of these letters, Mr. Murray had to depend upon his memory, after making a hurried perusal of them. He was not allowed to copy any of them, but merely took a rough list. No record was kept of the dates. Among them was a letter from the King of Bavaria, urging his claims as a true and faithful ally, and claiming for his reward the dominion of Würtemberg.

There were several letters from the Prussian Royal family, including one from the King, insinuating that by the cession of Hanover to him his territorial frontier would be rendered more secure. The Emperor Paul, in a letter written on a small scrap of paper, proposed to transfer his whole army to Napoleon, to be employed in turning the English out of India, provided he would prevent them passing the Gut and enclosing the Baltic.

The Empress of Austria wrote an apology for the

\* Afterwards Mrs. Eaton, author of 'Letters from Italy.'

uncultivated state of mind of her daughter, Marie Louise, about to become Napoleon's bride ; but added that her imperfect education presented the advantage of allowing Napoleon to mould her opinions and principles in accordance with his own views and wishes.

This correspondence would probably have met with an immense sale, but Mr. Murray entertained doubts as to the propriety of publishing documents so confidential, and declined to purchase them for the sum proposed. The next day, after his refusal, he ascertained that Prince Lieven had given, on behalf of his government, not less than £10,000 for the letters emanating from the Court of Russia alone. Thus the public missed the perusal of an important series of international scandals.

Towards the end of the same year, Miss H. M. Williams published, through Mr. Murray, her 'Narrative of Events in France in 1815.' While expressing her pleasure at his consenting to bring out the work, she added, "for my part I accuse myself of having spared the tyrant (Bonaparte) too much." Mr. Murray sent a copy of the book to his friend Isaac D'Israeli, who wrote in reply :—

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I have just finished Miss Williams's narrative, and the result is so very different from what I expected, that I can't refrain from telling you that I consider it a *capital work*, written with great skill, talent, and care ; full of curious and new developments, and some facts which we did not know before. There breathes through the whole a most attractive spirit, and her feelings sometimes break out in the most beautiful effusions. This narrative is not a book made up for the occasion, but will enter the historical list ; and it must be popular, as it is the most entertaining imaginable ; one of those books one does not like to quit before

finishing it. I cannot tell whether she writes for a particular purpose, but she writes well. Time has sobered her volatile nonsense, while near thirty years ago she wrote novels and middling poetry. It is true she writes now with very different feelings, but that does not prove that the present are not genuine. She has turned her *petti*-coat, for ladies have no other coats to turn; but if she has discovered that the former side was both dirty and faded, the present one is not the less decent for that.

I write this because I can't get conveniently to you, and further, that you never spoke to me in the highest commendation of the book. It is one of the very best we have long had.

In haste, yours,

I. D'I.

Benjamin Constant wrote to Murray from Brussels, offering him for publication a work dealing with the History of the Government of France, from the return of the Royal family to the day on which the book was printed. "The period I mean to describe," said Constant, "is better known to me than to most men in Europe, and my name will perhaps be of some interest, as a witness or an actor in the last events." He referred Mr. Murray to Sir James Mackintosh—a friend of both—but the work does not seem to have been published—at least in English.

Some of the obscure authors who applied to Mr. Murray were exorbitant in their ideas of remuneration, but this was not the case with Miss Jane Austen, one of the most modest of authoresses. Her first novel was 'Northanger Abbey.' It remained long in manuscript, and eventually she succeeded in selling it to a bookseller at Bath for £10. He had not the courage to publish it, and after it had remained in his possession for some years, Miss Austen bought it back for the same money he had paid for it. She next wrote 'Sense and Sensibility,' and 'Pride and Prejudice.' The latter book was summarily rejected by

Mr. Cadell. At length these two books were published anonymously by Mr. Egerton, and though they did not make a sensation, they gradually attracted attention, and obtained admirers. No one could be more surprised than the authoress, who received no less than £150 from the profits of her first published work—‘Sense and Sensibility.’

When Miss Austen had finished ‘Emma,’ she put herself in communication with Mr. Murray, who read her ‘Pride and Prejudice,’ and sent it to Gifford. Gifford replied as follows :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

“I have for the first time looked into ‘Pride and Prejudice ;’ and it is really a very pretty thing. No dark passages ; no secret chambers ; no wind-howlings in long galleries ; no drops of blood upon a rusty dagger—things that should now be left to ladies’ maids and sentimental washerwomen.”

In a later letter he said :—

September 29th, 1815.

“I have read ‘Pride and Prejudice’ *again*—’tis very good—wretchedly printed, and so pointed as to be almost unintelligible. Make no apology for sending me anything to read or revise. I am always happy to do either, in the thought that it may be useful to you.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Of ‘Emma,’ I have nothing but good to say. I was sure of the writer before you mentioned her. The MS., though plainly written, has yet some, indeed many little omissions ; and an expression may now and then be amended in passing through the press. I will readily undertake the revision.”

‘Emma’ was accordingly published in December 1815. By request of Miss Austen, Mr. Murray sent a copy to the Prince Regent, who had granted the authoress permission

to dedicate the work to his Royal Highness. Miss Austen's two other novels, 'Northanger Abbey,' and 'Persuasion' were also published by Murray, but did not appear until after her death in 1818. The profits of the four novels which had been published before her death did not amount to more than seven hundred pounds.

At the time when Lord Byron's poems and Miss Austen's novels were published, Mr. Murray was inundated with poems and novels from all parts of the country. Some of the poets wished to have "the honour of the name of Lord Byron's publisher on the title-page," while one of them, a lady of Cirencester, applied to him for "his celebrity and acknowledged liberality." Manuscripts without end came to hand; in the haste of business they were sometimes overlooked; and indignant letters arrived demanding their return. The poems and novels were for the most part declined.

Mr. Murray also began to publish the works of Mr. Malthus on 'Rent,' the 'Corn Laws,' and the 'Essay on Population.' His pamphlet on Rent appeared in March 1815. Writing to Mr. Murray, he says :—

*Mr. Malthus to John Murray.*

"I am fully persuaded that all the trading classes, not immediately connected with foreign commerce, will feel very severely the loss of home demand, and the increased pressure of taxation occasioned by the fall in the price of corn; but if the nation is almost unanimous against restrictions, I fear that the passing of the Act under such circumstances will be a perpetually reviving cause of discontent."

Number 24 of the *Review* pleased Gifford very much. In writing to Murray on the subject, he said :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

Jan. 27th, 1815.

"I will beg you to get a work for Mr. Lyall. His article, which I have looked at again, is truly excellent\*—but you must never venture into Scotland again without a coat of mail and a blunderbuss. Seriously, the sterling, manly sense of the *Review* pleases me very much, indeed."

The Rev. P. Elmsley, vicar of St. Mary Cray—a contributor to the *Quarterly*—was not so well pleased as Gifford.

*Rev. P. Elmsley to John Murray.*

"I think you have not been very brilliant of late. I must say that there is as great a difference between Jeffrey's best papers and your politics as between Handel and his bellows-blower. If this comparison does not please you, you may erase Handel and the bellows-blower, and read Burke and Junius, or Milton and Blackmore. . . . Is there not too much of the dry rot? Barrow ought not to ride you so unmercifully." †

Referring to the previous number, Mr. Elmsley said :—

"I want to know, what I don't expect you to tell me, who *did* the 'Paradise of Coquettes?' ‡ Is it not the same hand which *did* 'Brand's Popular Antiquities' in the last number but one.§ I should be sorry to have my brain so full of cobwebs as that gentleman's, be he who he may. Then, your politician, who talks about that 'enemy to Europe, the King of Saxony,' is a most useful performer. I wish he would take to some other subject, for, as to politics, he is hardly superior to a newspaper editor. I

\* Archdeacon Lyall's article was a review of Stewart's 'Philosophy of the Human Mind.'

† Numbers 15, 19, and 23, had each contained an article on timber and shipbuilding, by John Barrow. Number 59 (in 1824) contained another article by him, exclusively on "Naval Dry Rot."

‡ It was written by F. Cohen (afterwards Sir F. Palgrave).

§ Mr. Elmsley was right in his conjecture.

have been in the habit of attributing these essays to Reginald Heber, who has the common infirmity of clever men, of thinking himself able to write on subjects that he has never studied."

It will thus be seen that Murray had no want of severe critics on his own staff. The next number (25) which was better, contained an article by a new and distinguished contributor, Henry Hallam.

In May 1815 Southey sent to Murray an article for the *Quarterly* written by a friend. Murray read it, but did not like it. He then sent it to Gifford, who wrote to him as follows :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

"The great difficulty with me is Southey. He entertains a very high opinion of his friend's talents, as he showed by employing him, and he has seen and approved the critique. No great proof of his own modesty, you will say, and I agree with you. But he is after all the sheet anchor of the *Review*, and should not be lightly hurt. Grosvenor Bedford's influence with him is so great that he can mould him as he pleases. I do think, however, that some little good may be done by a few omissions towards the conclusion. . . . I think you might have spent the day more cheerfully than in going so many miles to eat up a poor poet's Sunday dinner. But perhaps you took a basket with you."

Murray sent Scott a copy of Mountstuart Elphinstone's 'Cabul,' which is referred to in the course of the following letter. The first part of the communication refers to the 'Lord of the Isles' and the 'Antiquary,' which had recently made their appearance. It had been suggested in a letter from Scott to Ballantyne, that the latter work should be offered to Murray and Blackwood, in the event of Constable and the Longmans not accepting the terms; but Constable held to the work, and, {in conjunction with

the Longmans, granted bills for £1500, and relieved Ballantyne of stock to the amount of £500. Therefore, the suggested arrangement with Murray and Blackwood fell through. The rest of Murray's letter to Scott was as follows :—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

Nov. 8th, 1815.

I trust it will not be necessary to give yourself any thought again of what will be agreeable to me with regard to any publication of yours, for what you desire will be completely satisfactory to me. As to the enlargement of the edition of 'Paul's Letters' to 6000, I can only assure you that, in my opinion, such an impression will be sold in a fortnight.

I sent you also a copy of a valuable work by Mountstuart Elphinstone on the 'Kingdom of Cabul,' which will, I think, interest you ; and to-day I have enclosed in a mail packet to Blackwood a copy of Helen Maria Williams's account of the 'Events in France,' which is to be published here to-morrow, and which you will be curious, at any rate, to see. I have added the addenda to 'Park,' and sent with it the 'Travels,' complete in 2 vols., 8vo., which I shall not publish till the end of the year, and which, therefore, I do not wish to be much seen.

Southey arrived last week from his travels, in great health and spirits. He would not go near Paris. He says that if Paris is not burnt to the ground, then the two cities that we read of in Scripture have been very ill used. He was very sorry that he missed seeing you in London. Lord Byron is perfectly well, and is in better dancing spirits than I ever knew him, expecting every day a son and heir. Mr. Hammond continues the same, and all talk of you repeatedly. Southey is sitting to Phillips for me, and I now want Crabbe, to whom I would beg the favour of a line at your leisure. Mr. Ward has just returned from Italy, and Rogers from a recent trip, to take a farewell view of the statues. Sotheby is recovering from the loss of his son in the bustle attending the preparation for 'Ivan,' which is to be performed at Drury Lane early in the year. Sir H. Davy read his Paper to-day at the Royal Society, on



his most valuable discovery of the means of preventing the fatal accidents in collieries from inflammable air. Canova is in London. Sir James Mackintosh has given up his house in town, and retired to Buckinghamshire to complete his 'History.' Campbell is carrying fast through the press his 'Selections of Poetry,' with original lives and criticisms, which are written with great simplicity and interest. Mr. Gifford is very well, and will be even better if you can find time to think of him. However, we both are aware that you are not idle; and we hope, if you have a spare moment, that you will dash us out something. I have a great many interesting works in the press. I will take care to remember you to your friends; and if I can be in any way useful to you in London, I hope you will not fail to command my services.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

JOHN MURRAY.

The following, which may be regarded as a continuation of the previous letter from Murray to Scott, may also be given.

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

December 25th, 1815.

DEAR SIR,

I was on the point of writing to you, when I received Mr. Blackwood's letter. Elphinstone's 'Cabul' has been, since the day of publication, in the hands of Mr. Barrow, whose article upon it is in progress, and will appear in our next number. I hope, therefore, that Lord Meadowbank will not feel disappointed; but allow us to hope for the favour of his valuable assistance on some other work, in which we would prefer to anticipate, rather than to follow the *Edinburgh Review*. I was about to tell you that Croker was so pleased with the idea of a Caledonian article from you, that he could not refrain from mentioning it to the Prince Regent, who is very fond of the subject, and he said he would be delighted, and is really anxious about it. Now, it occurs to me, as our *Edinburgh* friends choose on many occasions to bring in the Prince's name to

abuse it, this might offer an equally fair opportunity of giving him that praise which is so justly due to his knowledge of the history of his country. We expect to publish our next number in the last week in January next. Eight sheets are already printed, and we will reserve the last *place d'honneur* for you.

I was with Lord Byron yesterday. He enquired after you, and bid me say how much he was indebted to your introduction of your poor Irish friend Maturin, who had sent him a tragedy, which Lord Byron received late in the evening, and read through, without being able to stop. He was so delighted with it that he sent it immediately to his fellow-manager, the Hon. George Lamb, who, late as it came to him, could not go to bed without finishing it. The result is that they have laid it before the rest of the Committee; they, or rather Lord Byron, feels it his duty to the author to offer it himself to the managers of Covent Garden. The poor fellow says in his letter that his hope of subsistence for his family for the next year rests upon what he can get for this play. I expressed a desire of doing something, and Lord Byron then confessed that he had sent him fifty guineas. I shall write to him to-morrow, and I think if you could draw some case for him and exhibit his merits, particularly if his play succeeds, I could induce Croker and Peel to interest themselves in his behalf, and get him a living.

Your interesting letter respecting poor Park's family is at present with Whishaw, who desires me to assure you that he will try all his means to effect your benevolent object; though the chances of at least immediate success are lessened at this time by the complete derangement of all our landholders. You will have noticed, perhaps, in the *Gazette*, the appointment of our friend Hammond as one of the Commissioners for arranging the claims of the British in France; and he sets out for Paris in a fortnight, so that I lose my chief 4 o'clock man. Have you any fancy to dash off an article on 'Emma'? It wants incident and romance, does it not? None of the author's other novels have been noticed, and surely 'Pride and Prejudice' merits high commendation.

Yours ever faithfully,

JOHN MURRAY.

Scott immediately complied with Murray's request. He did "dash off an article on 'Emma,'" which appeared in No. 27 of the *Quarterly*. In enclosing his article to Murray, Scott wrote as follows :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

January 19th, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

Enclosed is the article upon 'Emma.' I have been spending my holidays in the country, where, besides constant labour in the fields during all the hours of daylight, the want of books has prevented my completing the Highland article. [The 'Culloden Papers,' which appeared in next number.] It will be off, however, by Tuesday's post, as I must take Sunday and Monday into the account of finishing it. It will be quite unnecessary to send proofs of 'Emma,' as Mr. Gifford will correct all obvious errors, and abridge it where necessary. I have obtained a promise of a provision for poor Archie Park ; pray say so, with my best respects to Mr. Whishaw. I have sent a commission to Wurz and Treuttel to procure me the Benedictine edition of the French Historians.\* If they should advise you that they have succeeded, and draw upon you for the price, please advise me, that I may put you in funds. I desired them to draw upon you at a month's sight. I wrote Lord Byron a few days since. But I must to the Highlands in great haste, so this is all at present from

Yours truly,

W. SCOTT.

January 25th, 1816.

My article is so long that I fancy you will think yourself in the condition of the conjuror, who after having a great deal of trouble in raising the devil, could not get rid of him after he had once made his appearance. But the Highlands is an immense field, and it would have been much more easy for me to have made a sketch twice as long than to

\* This was no doubt the source whence Scott drew his novel of 'Quentin Durward.'

make it shorter. There still wants eight or nine pages, which you will receive by to-morrow's or next day's post ; but I fancy you will be glad to get on. I sent you a few days since the article on 'Enima.' Inclosed is a letter from Mrs. Scott to her friends in Whitehorse Street,\* which I beg you will have the goodness to forward.

Yours truly,

W. SCOTT.

"Elphinstone's book is by far the most interesting of the kind I have ever read."

The article on the 'Culloden Papers,' which occupied fifty pages of the *Review* (No. 28), described the clans of the Highlands their number, manners, and habits ; and gave a summary history of the Rebellion of '45. It was graphically and vigorously written, and is considered one of Scott's best essays. The other review, of 'Fair Isabel of Cothele,' was only three pages in length. The writer presumed that the MS. of the poem had been enclosed in a bureau of Walter Scott, and hence the great likeness between it and 'The Lady of the Lake.' It might also have been closeted with the papers of Lord Byron, and hence its resemblance to his Lordship's works.

Two other letters from Mr. Scott to Murray may be given, as they relate to articles in the *Quarterly*.

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

October 10th, 1815. (?)

DEAR SIR,

After carefully looking over the series of novels, which I re-inclose, I find I can make nothing of them. The canvas is, in fact, too narrow for so extensive a subject. I have written to Mr. Gifford, wishing to review Polwhele's works ['Fair Isabel of Cothele'] or the 'Theatrical

\* The Dumerques, with whom Sir Walter generally resided during his visits to London.

Row.' The last has never, I think, been attempted, at least in a general point of view, and might, I think, be made a pleasing and original article. Should Mr. G. approve, you will be so good as to send me such of the trashy publications concerning it as may be most current. I must have a text, though the sermon will rather refer to the thing itself than the publications concerning it. I will be happy to look over the article on Crabbe should Mr. G. wish it, but it is always difficult (I find it so at least) to do much in the way of addition or emendation unless the general colouring and style should agree more than is likely.

I have written a long letter to Gifford on all these matters. I am greatly obliged to you for settling with my newspaper man, which, I suppose, will square accounts between us for my two little articles in last number.

I am, dear Sir, yours very truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

The other letter is as follows [no date, but supposed to be Edinburgh, 1816]:—

MY DEAR SIR,

I am glad you like the article. With all my exertions I have not got through the corrections to save this post, and I wish to avail myself of the admirable letters of Croker and Malcolm to mend the reflections on Waterloo. Tomorrow is no post, but you will have the remaining sheets by the first post, *sans faute*. I am writing during a long and confused pleading.

Yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

From these letters it will be observed how diligently Mr. Scott was helping onward the progress of the *Quarterly*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

CHARLES MATURIN—S. T. COLERIDGE—LEIGH HUNT—  
MADAME DE STAËL—MRS. GRAHAM.

SCOTT'S "poor Irish friend, Maturin," referred to in the previous chapter, was a young Irish clergyman, who was under the necessity of depending upon his brains and pen for the maintenance of his family. Charles Maturin, after completing his course of education at Trinity College, married Miss Harriet Kinsburg. His family grew, but not his income. He took orders, and obtained the curacy of St. Peter's Church, Dublin, but owing to his father's affairs having become embarrassed, he was compelled to open a boarding-school, with the view of assisting the family. Unfortunately, he became bound for a friend, who deceived him, and eventually he was obliged to sacrifice his interest in the school. Being thus driven to extremities, he tried to live by literature, and produced 'The Fatal Revenge ; or, the Family of Montorio,' the first of a series of romances, in which he outdid Mrs. Radcliffe and Monk Lewis. 'The Fatal Revenge' was followed by 'The Wild Irish Boy,' for which Colburn gave him £80, and 'The Milesian Chief,' all full of horrors and misty grandeur. These works did not bring him in much money ; but, in 1815, he determined to win the height of dramatic fame in his 'Bertram ; or, the Castle of St. Aldebrand,' a tragedy. He submitted the

drama to Walter Scott, as from an "obscure Irishman," telling him of his sufferings as an author and the father of a family, and imploring his kind opinion. Scott replied in the most friendly manner, gave him much good advice, spoke of the work as "grand and powerful, the characters being sketched with masterly enthusiasm;" and, what was practically better, sent him £50 as a token of his esteem and sympathy, and as a temporary stop-gap until better times came round. He moreover called the attention of Lord Byron, then on the Committee of Management of Drury Lane Theatre, to the play, and his Lordship strongly recommended a performance of it. Thanks to the splendid acting of Kean, it succeeded, and Maturin realized about £1000.

Lord Byron, when referring to Maturin, says:—"He sent his 'Bertram' and a letter *without* his address, so that at first I could give him no answer. When I at last hit upon his residence, I sent him a favourable answer, and something more substantial. The play succeeded, but I was at that time absent from England."

'Bertram' was published by Murray, a circumstance which brought him into frequent communication with the unfortunate Maturin. The latter offered more plays, more novels, and many articles for the *Quarterly*. With reference to one of his articles—a review of Sheil's 'Apostate'—Gifford said, "a more potatoe-headed arrangement, or rather derangement, I have never seen. I have endeavoured to bring some order out of the chaos. There is a sort of wild eloquence in it that makes it worth preserving."

Maturin acknowledged Murray's kindness in sending him some books which he desired to read, and after

referring to his novel of 'Montorio' and his play of 'Bertram,' he concluded :—

*The Rev. C. Maturin to John Murray.*

Dublin, June 22nd, 1816.

I am in horrid dejection ; every shilling that I draw from England goes to pay the debts of that scoundrel to whom I don't owe a farthing, and from whom I shall never receive one. My dear Murray, I must write to you more confidentially. I am given to understand, from all sides, that I have not been so well treated as I ought in another quarter. I know not how to act ; at all events, *Volto sciolto, i pensieri stretti* must be my motto for the present. I am in such a wretched state of lassitude and depression that I have been some hours writing these few lines, pausing over every sentence to know whether it had any meaning, and doubting whether I was capable of giving it any. However, I have still some gratitude left, to send my best respects to Mrs. Murray, and to assure you that to your friendly and hospitable attention I am indebted for the only pleasant hours passed during my sojourn in London.

Yours, my dear Murray, most truly,

CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN.

Should you think of answering this incoherent scrawl, let me know if 'Bertram' keeps any hold of the public still, as I see Kean is announced in his former characters.

Two months later Maturin wrote :—

*The Rev. C. Maturin to John Murray.*

August 19th, 1816.

From your letter I judge that you do not wish me to produce anything till after the appearance of my next



tragedy. I perfectly agree with you, but *entre nous* I labour under most serious difficulties in the composition. I have not a single friend to consult, no books, no excitement of any description, and you know not what nonsense a man may write who has only his own imagination to prompt, and his own ear to please. The state of the public mind, too, is unfavourable; the nation is out of humour with the Peace, and the marriage, and the taxes make the success of a work of imagination more problematical than ever. There is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your 'English' lion living, when once his rage is roused. However, I am, as all authors should be, doing my best and thinking my worst; and, to confess the truth, what I have written pleases me better than 'Bertram.' I am infinitely obliged by your having the goodness to assure me that the impression I made was favourable, but I confess I want all the evidence of your testimony to prove it. I went over, not expecting much, and came back receiving nothing, not even common civility, which in certain quarters I surely was entitled to as an invited stranger. But let that go to the Tomb of all the Capulets. Let me beg of you to write to me. I cannot describe to you the effect of an English letter on my spirits; it is like the wind to an Æolian harp. I cannot produce a note without it. Give me advice, abuse, news, anything, or nothing (if it were possible that *you* could write nothing), but *write*. Send me an account of your tour, and I will give you in return the 'Journal of an Irish Lodging House,' where I have been murdering the summer, and I can promise the balance will not leave me in your debt for the miseries of excursions. With best respects to Mrs. Murray,

Believe me, yours most truly,

C. ROB. MATURIN.

Maturin continued to press his literary work on Murray, who however, though he relieved him by the gift of several large sums of money, declined all further offers of publication save the tragedy of 'Manuel,' which he undertook as a charity. Lord Byron also continued to take an interest

in him, and in answer to enquiries received the following information from Mr. Murray :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

March 15th, 1817.

Maturin's new tragedy, 'Manuel,' appeared on Saturday last, and I am sorry to say that the opinion of Mr. Gifford was established by the impression made on the audience. The first act very fine, the rest exhibiting a want of judgment not to be endured. It was brought out with uncommon splendour, and was well acted. Kean's character as an old man—a warrior—was new and well sustained, for he had, of course, selected it, and professed to be—and he acted as if he were—really pleased with it. But this feeling changed to dislike after the first night, for he then abused it, and has actually walked through the part ever since, that is to say, for the other three nights of performance, for they do not act on Wednesdays or Fridays, and this night the performance is changed to 'Lovers' Vows.' I met Geo. Lamb on Tuesday, and he complained bitterly of Kean's conduct, said that he had ruined the success of the tragedy, and that in consequence he feared Maturin would receive nothing. The expense to the managers must have been very great, and it will complete, I suspect, the ruin of Drury under its present directorship, and so I rejoice that your name appears not amongst them. I send you the first act, that you may see the best of it. I have undertaken to print the tragedy at my own expense, and to give the poor Author the whole of the profit.

In 1824 poor Maturin died, in Dublin, in extreme poverty. The leniency and kindness extended to him by Byron and Scott was not shared by Coleridge, who, in his 'Biographia Litteraria,' uses the most severe and unpromising language against 'Bertram.'

The mention of the name of Coleridge, who was in frequent correspondence with Mr. Murray about this time (1816), induces us to revert to an earlier date to record the origin of their association.

It is not improbable that it was Southey who suggested to Murray the employment of his brother-in-law, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, from his thorough knowledge of German, as the translator of Goethe's 'Faust.' The application came to him in a roundabout manner. The following is Mr. Coleridge's first letter to Murray :—

*Mr. Coleridge to John Murray.*

Josiah Wade's, Esq., 2, Queen's Square, Bristol.  
August 23rd, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

I have heard, from my friend Mr. Charles Lamb, writing by desire of Mr. Robinson, that you wish to have the justly-celebrated 'Faust' of Goethe translated, and that some one or other of my partial friends have induced you to consider me as the man most likely to execute the work adequately, those excepted, of course, whose higher power (established by the solid and satisfactory ordeal of the wide and rapid sale of their works) it might seem profanation to employ in any other manner than in the development of their own intellectual organization. I return my thanks to the recommender, whoever he be, and no less to you for your flattering faith in the recommendation; and thinking, as I do, that among many volumes of praiseworthy German poems, the 'Louisa' of Voss, and the 'Faust' of Goethe, are the two, if not the only ones, that are emphatically *original* in their conception, and characteristic of a new and peculiar sort of thinking and imagining, I should not be averse from exerting my best efforts in an attempt to import whatever is importable of either or of both into our own language.

But let me not be suspected of a presumption of which I am not consciously guilty, if I say that I feel two difficulties; one arising from long disuse of versification, added to what I know, better than the most hostile critic could inform me, of my comparative weakness; and the other, that *any* work in Poetry strikes me with more than common awe, as proposed for realization by myself, because from long habits of meditation on language, as the symbolic medium of the connection of Thought with Thought, and

of Thought as affected and modified by Passion and Emotion, I should spend days in avoiding what I deemed faults, though with the full fore-knowledge that their admission would not have offended perhaps three of all my readers, and might be deemed Beauties by 300—if so many there were ; and this not out of any respect for the Public (*i.e.*, the persons who might happen to purchase and look over the Book), but from a hobby-horsical, superstitious regard to my own feelings and sense of Duty. Language is the sacred Fire in this Temple of Humanity, and the Muses are its especial and vestal Priestesses. Though I cannot prevent the vile drugs and counterfeit Frankincense, which render its flame at once pitchy, glowing, and unsteady, I would yet be no voluntary accomplice in the Sacrilege. With the commencement of a PUBLIC, commences the degradation of the GOOD and the BEAUTIFUL—both fade and retire before the accidentally AGREEABLE. ‘Othello’ becomes a hollow lip-worship ; and the ‘CASTLE SPECTRE,’ or any more peccant thing of Froth, Noise, and Impermanence, that may have overbillowed it on the restless sea of curiosity, is the *true* Prayer of the Praise and Admiration.

I thought it right to state to you these opinions of mine, that you might know that I think the Translation of the Faust a task demanding (from *me*, I mean), no ordinary efforts—and why ? This—that it is painful, very painful, and even odious to me, to attempt anything of a literary nature, with any motive of *pecuniary* advantage ; but that I bow to the all-wise Providence, which has made me a *poor* man, and therefore compelled me by other duties inspiring feelings, to bring *even my Intellect to the Market*. And the finale is this. I should like to attempt the Translation. If you will mention your terms, at once and irrevocably (for I am an idiot at bargaining, and shrink from the very thought), I will return an answer by the next Post, whether in my present circumstances, I can or cannot undertake it. If I do, I will do it immediately ; but I must have all Goethe’s works, which I cannot procure in Bristol ; for to give the ‘Faust’ without a preliminary critical Essay would be worse than nothing, as far as regards the PUBLIC. If you were to ask me as a Friend, whether I think it would suit *the General Taste*, I should reply that I cannot

calculate on caprice and accident (for instance, some fashionable man or review happening to take it up favourably), but that otherwise my fears would be stronger than my hopes. Men of genius will admire it, of necessity. Those must, who think deepest and most imaginatively. Then 'Louisa' would delight *all* of good hearts.

I remain, dear Sir,

With every respect,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

To this letter Mr. Murray replied as follows :—

*John Murray to Mr. Coleridge.*

August 29th, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

I feel greatly obliged by the favour of your attention to the request which I had solicited our friend Mr. Robinson to make to you for the translation of Goethe's extraordinary drama of 'Faust,' which I suspect that no one could do justice to besides yourself. It will be the first attempt to render into classical English a German work of peculiar but certainly of unquestionable Genius; and you must allow that its effects upon the public must be doubtful. I am desirous however of making the experiment, and this I would not do under a less skilful agent than the one to whom I have applied. I am no less anxious that you should receive, as far as I think the thing can admit, a fair remuneration; and trusting that you will not undertake it unless you feel disposed to execute the labour perfectly *con amore*, and in a style of versification equal to 'Remorse,' I venture to propose to you the sum of One Hundred Pounds for the Translation and the preliminary Analysis, with such passages translated as you may judge proper of the works of Goethe, with a copy of which I will have the pleasure of supplying you as soon as I have your final determination. The sum which I mention shall be paid to you in two months from the day on which you place the complete Translation and Analysis in my hands; this will allow a reasonable time for your previous correction of the sheets through the press. I shall be glad to hear from you by return of Post, if convenient, as I propose to set

out this week for the Continent. If this work succeeds, I am in hopes that it will lead to many similar undertakings.

With sincere esteem, I am, dear Sir,  
Your faithful Servant,  
J. MURRAY.

I should hope that it might not prove inconvenient to you to complete the whole for Press in the course of November next.

Mr. Coleridge replied as follows, from the same address :—

*Mr. Coleridge to John Murray.*

August 31st, 1814.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter. Considering the necessary labour, and (from the questionable nature of the original work, both as to its fair claims to Fame—the diction of the good and wise according to unchanging principles—and as to its chance for Reputation, as an accidental result of local and temporary taste), the risk of character on the part of the Translator, who will assuredly have to answer for any disappointment of the reader, the terms proposed are humiliatingly low ; yet such as, under modifications, I accede to. I have received testimonials from men not merely of genius according to my belief, but of the highest accredited reputation, that my translation of ‘Wallenstein’ was in language and in metre superior to the original, and the parts most admired were substitutions of my own, on a principle of compensation. Yet the whole work went for waste-paper. I was abused—nay, my own remarks in the Preface were transferred to a Review, as the Reviewer’s sentiments *against* me, without even a hint that he had copied them from my own Preface. Such was the fate of ‘Wallenstein’! And yet I dare appeal to any number of men of Genius—say, for instance, Mr. Walter Scott, Mr. Southey, Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Sotheby, Sir G. Beaumont, &c., whether the ‘Wallenstein’ with all its defects (and it has grievous defects), is not worth all Schiller’s other plays put together. But I wonder not. It

was *too* good, and not good enough; and the advice of the younger Pliny: 'Aim at pleasing either *all*, or *the few*,' is as prudentially good as it is philosophically accurate. I wrote to Mr. Longman before the work was published, and foretold its fate, even to a detailed accuracy, and advised him to put up with the loss from the purchase of the MSS. and of the Translation, as a much less evil than the publication. I went so far as to declare that its success was, in the state of public Taste, impossible; that the enthusiastic admirers of 'The Robbers,' 'Cabal and Love,' &c., would lay the blame on me; and that he himself would suspect that if he had only let on *another* Translator than, &c. Everything took place as I had foretold, even his own feelings—so little do Prophets gain from the fulfilment of their Prophecies!

On the other hand, though I know that executed as alone I can or dare do it—that is, to the utmost of my power (for which the intolerable Pain, nay the far greater Toil and Effort of doing otherwise, is a far safer Pledge than any solicitude on my part concerning the approbation of the PUBLIC), the translation of so very difficult a work as the 'Faustus,' will be most inadequately remunerated by the terms you propose; yet they very probably are the highest it may be worth your while to offer to *me*. I say this as a philosopher; for, though I have now been much talked of, and written of, for evil and not for good, but for suspected capability, yet none of my works have ever sold. The 'Wallenstein' went to the waste-basket. The 'Remorse,' though acted twenty times, rests quietly on the shelves in the second edition, with copies enough for seven years' consumption, or seven times seven. I lost £200 by the non-payment, from forgetfulness, and under various pretences, by 'The Friend';\* and for my poems I *did* get from £10 to £15. And yet, forsooth, the *Quarterly Review* attacks me for neglecting and misusing my powers! I do not quarrel with the Public—all is as it must be—but surely the Public (if there be such a thing) has no right to

\* Twenty-seven numbers of *The Friend* were published by Coleridge at Penrith in Cumberland in 1809-10, but the periodical proved a failure, principally from the irregularity of its appearance. It was about this time that he was addicted to opium-eating.

quarrel with *me* for not getting more, for I fail by publishing what they will not read!

The 'Faust,' you perhaps know, is only a *Fragment*. Whether Goethe ever will finish it, or whether it is ever his object to do so, is quite unknown. A large proportion of the work cannot be rendered in blank verse, but must be given in wild *lyrical* metres; and Mr. Lamb informs me that the Baroness de Staël has given a very unfavourable account of the work. Still, however, I will undertake it, and that instantly, so as to let you have the last sheet by the middle of November, on the following terms:—

1. That on the delivery of the last MS. sheet you remit 100 guineas to Mrs. Coleridge, or Mr. Robert Southey, at a bill of five weeks. 2. That I, or my widow or family, may, any time after two years from the first publication, have the privilege of reprinting it in any collection of all my poetical writings, or of my works in general, which set off with a Life of me, might perhaps be made profitable to my widow. And 3rd, that if (as I long ago meditated) I should re-model the whole, give it a finale, and be able to bring it, thus re-written and re-cast, on the stage, it shall not be considered as a breach of the engagement between us, I on my part promising that you shall, for an equitable consideration, have the copy of this new work, either as a separate work, or forming a part of the same volume or book, as circumstances may dictate to you. When I say that I am confident that in this *possible* and not probable case, I should not repeat or retain one fifth of the original, you will perceive that I consult only my dread of appearing to act amiss, as it would be even more easy to compose the whole anew.

If these terms suit you I will commence the Task as soon as I receive Goethe's works from you. If you could procure Goethe's late Life of himself, which extends to a short way, or any German biographical work, it would enable me to render the preliminary Essay more entertaining.

Most respectfully yours, dear Sir,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Mr. Murray's reply to this letter has not been preserved. At all events, nothing further was done by Coleridge with



respect to the translation of 'Faust,' which is to be deplored, as his exquisite and original melody of versification might have produced a translation almost as great as the original.

Shortly after Coleridge took up his residence with the Gillmans at Highgate, and his intercourse with Murray recommenced. Lord Byron, while on the managing committee of Drury Lane Theatre, had been instrumental in getting Coleridge's 'Remorse' played upon the stage, as he entertained a great respect for its author. He was now encouraging Mr. Murray to publish other works by Coleridge—among others, 'Zapolya' and 'Christabel.'

On the 12th of April, 1816, Coleridge gave the following lines to Mr. Murray, written in his own hand :—\*

GLYCINE : a Song.

A sunny shaft did I behold,  
From sky to earth it slanted,  
And pois'd therein a Bird so bold—  
Sweet bird ! thou wert enchanted !  
He sank, he rose, he twinkled, troll'd,  
Within that shaft of sunny mist ;  
His Eyes of Fire, his Beak of Gold,  
All else of Amethyst !  
And thus he sang : Adieu ! Adieu !  
Love's dreams prove seldom true.  
Sweet month of May ! we must away !  
Far, far away !  
To day ! to day !

In the following month (May 8th, 1816) Mr. Coleridge offered Mr. Murray his 'Remorse' for publication, with a Preface. He also offered his poem of 'Christabel,' still unfinished. For the latter Mr. Murray agreed to give him seventy guineas, "until the other poems shall be completed, when the copyright shall revert to the author," and also

\* We give the lines because they are not included in Coleridge's complete works ; yet they were set to music many years ago.

£20 for permission to publish the poem entitled 'Kubla Khan,' but which the author should not be restricted from publishing in any other way that he pleased.

Next month (June 6th, 1816) Mr. Murray allowed Coleridge £50 for an edition of 1000 of his 'Christmas Tale,' and he also advanced him another £50 for a play then in course of composition; in default of this being completed, the 'Christmas Tale' to become Mr. Murray's property. The drama proved to be 'Zapolya,' which was not completed till the following year. In the meantime Coleridge was full of "plans," as will be seen from the following letter:—

*Mr. Coleridge to John Murray.*

Highgate, July 4th, 1816.

I have often thought that there might be set on foot a review of old books, *i.e.*, of all works important or remarkable, the authors of which are deceased, with a probability of a tolerable sale, if only the original *plan* were a good one, and if no articles were admitted but from men who understood and recognized the Principles and Rules of Criticism, which should form the first number. I would not take the works chronologically, but according to the likeness or contrast of the *kind* of genius—*ex. gr.* Jeremy Taylor, Milton (his prose works), and Burke—Dante and Milton (poetry)—Scaliger and Dr. Johnson. Secondly, if especial attention were paid to all men who had produced, or aided in producing, any great revolution in the Taste or opinion of an age, as Petrarch, Ulrich von Hutten, &c. (here I will dare risk the self-conceit of referring to my own parallel of Voltaire and Erasmus, of Luther and Rousseau in the seventh number of 'The Friend'). Lastly, if proper care was taken that in every number of the *Review* there should be a fair proportion of *amusing* matter, such as a review of Paracelsus, Cardan, Old Fuller; a review of Jest Books, tracing the various metempsychosis of the same joke through all ages and countries; a History of Court Fools, for which a laborious German has furnished ample and

highly interesting materials ; foreign writers, though alive, not to be excluded, if only their works are of established character in their own country, and scarcely heard of, much less translated, in English literature. Jean Paul Richter would supply two or three delightful articles.

Any works which should fall in your way respecting the Jews since the destruction of the Temple, I should of course be glad to look through. Above all, Mezeray's (no ! that is not the name, I think) 'History of the Jews,' that I *must* have.

I shall be impatient for the rest of Mr. Frere's sheets. Most unfeignedly can I declare that I am unable to decide whether the *admiration* which the *excellence* inspires, or the wonder which the knowledge of the countless *difficulties* so happily overcome, never ceases to excite in my mind during the re-perusal and collation of them with the original Greek, be the greater. I have not a moment's hesitation in fixing on Mr. Frere as the man of the correctest and most genial taste among all our contemporaries whom I have ever met with, personally or in their works. Should choice or chance lead you to sun and air yourself on Highgate Hill during any of your holiday excursions, my worthy friend and his amiable and accomplished wife will be happy to see you. We dine at four, and drink tea at six.

Yours ever respectfully,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Mr. Murray did not accept Mr. Coleridge's proposal to publish his works in a collected form or his articles for the *Quarterly*, as appears from the following letter :—

*Mr. Coleridge to John Murray.*

Highgate, March 26th, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

I cannot be offended by your opinion that my talents are not adequate to the requisites of matter and manner for the *Quarterly Review*, nor should I consider it as a disgrace to fall short of Robert Southey in any department of literature. I owe, however, an honest gratification to the conversation between you and Mr. Gillman, for I read

Southey's article, on which Mr. Gillman and I have, it appears, formed very different opinions. It is, in my judgment, a very masterly article.\* I would to heaven, my dear sir, that the opinions of Southey, Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Mr. Frere, and of men like these in learning and genius, concerning my comparative claims to be a man of letters, were to be received as the criterion, instead of the wretched, and in deed and in word mystical jargon of the *Examiner* and *Edinburgh Review*.

Mr. Randall will be so good as to repay you the £50, and I understand from Mr. Gillman that you are willing to receive this as a settlement respecting the 'Zapolya.' The corrections and additions to the two first books of the 'Christabel' may become of more value to you when the work is finished, as I trust it will be in the course of the spring, than they are at present. And let it not be forgotten, that while I had the utmost malignity of personal enmity to cry down the work, with the exception of Lord Byron, there was not one of the many who had so many years together spoken so warmly in its praise who gave it the least positive furtherance after its publication. It was openly asserted that the *Quarterly Review* did not wish to attack it, but was ashamed to say a word in its praise. Thank God! these things pass from me like drops from a duck's back, except as far as they take the bread out of my mouth; and this I can avoid by consenting to publish only for the *present* times whatever I may write. You will be so kind as to acknowledge the receipt of the £50 in such manner as to make all matters as clear between us as possible; for, though you, I am sure, could not have intended to injure my character, yet the misconceptions, and perhaps misrepresentations, of your words have had that tendency. By a letter from R. Southey I find that he will be in town on the 17th. The article in Tuesday's *Courier* was by me, and two other articles on Apostacy and Renegadeism, which will appear this week.

Believe me, with respect, your obliged,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

\* This must have been Southey's article on Parliamentary Reform, in No. 31, which, though due in October 1816, was not published until February 1817.

The following letter completes Coleridge's correspondence with Murray :—

*Mr. Coleridge to John Murray.*

Highgate, March 29th, 1817.

DEAR SIR,

From not referring to the paper dictated by yourself, and signed by me in your presence, you have wronged yourself in the receipt you have been so good as to send me, and on which I have written as follows—"A mistake; I am still indebted to Mr. Murray £20 *legally* (which I shall pay the moment it is in my power), and £30 from whatever sum I may receive from the 'Christabel' when it is finished. Should Mr. Murray decline its publication, I conceive myself bound *in honor* to repay." I strive in vain to discover any single act or expression of my own, or for which I could be directly or indirectly responsible as a moral being, that would account for the change in your mode of thinking respecting me. But, with every due acknowledgment of the kindness and courtesy that I received from you since my first coming to town,

I remain, dear Sir, your obliged,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Leigh Hunt was another of Murray's correspondents. When the *Quarterly* was started, Hunt, in his Autobiography, says that "he had been invited, nay pressed by the publisher, to write in the new Review, which surprised me, considering its politics and the great difference of my own." Hunt adds that he had no doubt that the invitation had been made at the instance of Gifford himself. Murray had a high opinion of Hunt as a critic, but not as a politician. Writing to Walter Scott in 1810 he said :—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

"Have you got or seen Hunt's critical essays, prefixed to a few novels that he edited. Lest you should not, I

send them. Hunt is most vilely wrongheaded in politics, and has thereby been turned away from the path of elegant criticism, which might have led him to eminence and respectability."

Hunt was then, with his brother, joint editor of the *Examiner*, and preferred writing for the newspaper to contributing articles to the *Quarterly*.

On Leigh Hunt's release from Horsemonger Lane Gaol, where he had been imprisoned for his libel on the Prince Regent, he proceeded, on the strength of his reputation, to compose the 'Story of Rimini,' the publication of which gave the author a place among the poets of the day. He sent a portion of the manuscript to Mr. Murray before the poem was finished, saying that it would amount to about 1400 lines. Hunt then proceeded (18th December, 1815) to mention the terms which he proposed to be paid for his work when finished. "Booksellers," he said, "tell me that I ought not to ask less than £450 (which is a sum I happen to want just now); and my friends, not in the trade, say I ought not to ask less than £500, with such a trifling acknowledgment upon the various editions after the second and third, as shall enable me to say that I am still profiting by it."

Mr. Murray sent his reply to Hunt through their common friend, Lord Byron:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

Dec. 27th, 1815.

"I wish your lordship to do me the favour to look at and to consider with your usual kindness the accompanying note to Mr. Leigh Hunt respecting his poem, for which he requests £450. This would presuppose a sale of, at least, 10,000 copies. Now, if I may trust to my own experience in these matters, I am by no means certain that the sale

would do more than repay the expenses of paper and print. But the poem is peculiar, and may be more successful than I imagine, in which event the proposition which I have made to the author will secure to him all the advantages of such a result. I trust that you will see in this an anxious desire to serve Mr. Hunt, although as a mere matter of business I cannot avail myself of his offer. I would have preferred calling upon you to-day were I not confined by a temporary indisposition ; but I think you will not be displeased at a determination founded upon the best judgment I can form of my own business. I am really uneasy at your feelings in this affair, but I think I may venture to assume that you know me sufficiently well to allow me to trust my decision entirely to your usual kindness."

*John Murray to Mr. Leigh Hunt.*

Dec. 27th, 1815.

DEAR SIR,

I have now read the MS. poem, which you confided to me, with particular attention, and find that it differs so much from any that I have published that I am fearful of venturing upon the extensive speculation to which your estimate would carry it. I therefore wish that you would propose its publication and purchase to such houses as Cadell, Longman, Baldwin, Mawman, &c., who are capable of becoming and likely to become purchasers, and then, should you not have found any arrangement to your mind, I would undertake to print an edition of 500 or 750 copies as a trial at my own risk, and give you one half of the profits. After this edition the copyright shall be entirely your own property. By this arrangement, in case the work turn out a prize, as it may do, I mean that you should have every advantage of its success, for its popularity once ascertained, I am sure you will find no difficulty in procuring purchasers, even if you should be suspicious of my liberality from this specimen of fearfulness in the first instance. I shall be most happy to assist you with any advice which my experience in these matters may render serviceable to you.

JOHN MURRAY.

Leigh Hunt replied at once :—

*Mr. Leigh Hunt to John Murray.*

Dec. 27th, 1815.

“The proposal to share the profits of a moderate first edition, and then to leave me in possession of the copy-right, appears to me to be not at all wanting in liberality, especially under the impression you have of it, as being an experiment. Should the poem not succeed, I shall, on my own part, be relieved from the awkward feeling of having been paid for what was not worth it. Should it be otherwise, I shall have the pleasure of showing my sense of your gentlemanly conduct in the fresh bargain you will allow me to make with you.”

After the poem was printed and published, Mr. Hunt, being pressed for money, made an application to the publisher, to which the following reply was given :—

*John Murray to Mr. Leigh Hunt.*

March 29th, 1816.

“The net balance of profit, supposing every copy to be sold, is £91 5s., of which your half will be £45 12s. 6d., for which, deducting £3 2s. 6d. for copies delivered to your order, there remains £42 10s. This I very willingly make £50, and enclose a note at three months for that sum in full for your share of this edition, and thus we will close the account. I have no doubt of the quick sale of the remainder of this edition, and look confidently to the publication of many others. I hope the bill I enclose will answer your present occasion, for the demands on me are so extensive that I am under the necessity of weighing out my means with circumspection. If you are satisfied with my statement, you will perhaps write a few lines saying that you have received a note from me at three months, £50 in full for your share and demand upon the first edition of ‘Rimini.’”



Mr. Hunt delayed sending the receipt until the 9th of April following, when he enclosed it with the following letter :—

*Mr. Leigh Hunt to John Murray.*

DEAR SIR,

You would have had the enclosed sooner, but I hoped, day after day, to have the pleasure of calling upon you, and have been twice in Piccadilly since you wrote to me. On one of the days, however, I was very late at dinner where I was engaged, and the other was a Sunday, when I thought you might choose to have one day out of seven to yourself and not be profanely interrupted. I am now going to say a word or two on the subject of the sale of my copyright, and ought indeed to have mentioned it before, but for a foolish disinclination I have to talk of these matters. Before I proceed any further I wish to say that I consider you, and you alone, as having possession of that copyright ultimately, from your having gone so far with it already in the publication, and treated me in so gentlemanly a manner; nor, in case it should be inconvenient to you to do what I am about to mention, shall I make use of the book in any other quarter, not that you might object perhaps to my so doing, but because, for my own gratification and convenience, I would much rather raise the money I want in another manner. There is no question therefore whatsoever on that point; all that I want to know is, whether you can do for me what I ask conveniently for your general speculations and the other demands upon you.

After a tedious recitation of his pecuniary troubles, Hunt concludes :

What I wanted to ask you then is simply this—whether, in the first instance, you think well enough of the 'Story of Rimini' to make you bargain with me for the copyright at once; or, in the second instance, whether, if you would rather wait a little, as I myself would do, I confess, if it were convenient, you have still enough hopes of the work, and enough reliance on myself personally, to advance me £450 on security, to be repaid in case you do not conclude

the bargain, or merged in the payment of the poem in case you do.

Believe me, very sincerely yours,  
LEIGH HUNT.

To this letter, Mr. Murray at once replied, desiring Mr. Hunt to stop for the present his proposed publication, as it might have the effect of drawing attention from the 'Story of Rimini,' which was rising in public estimation, and, left to itself, would make its way. "Any publication," he said, "of the nature you propose, succeeding it so rapidly, would have the effect, at least, of dividing attention, and perhaps of drawing it off from an important object to fix it upon one of less moment." Mr. Murray's reply was not satisfactory, as will be observed from the following letter of Leigh Hunt :—

*Mr. Leigh Hunt to John Murray.*

April 12th, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

I just write to say something which I had omitted in my last, and to add a word or two on the subject of an expression in your answer to it. I mean the phrase "plan of assistance." I do not suppose that you had the slightest intention of mortifying me by that phrase ; but I should wish to impress upon you, that I did not consider my application to you as coming in the shape of what is ordinarily termed an application for assistance. Circumstances have certainly compelled me latterly to make requests, and resort to expedients, which, however proper in themselves, I would not willingly have been acquainted with ; but I have very good prospects before me, and you are mistaken (I beg you to read this in the best and most friendly tone you can present to yourself) if you have at all apprehended that I should be in the habit of applying to you for assistance, or for anything whatsoever, for which I did not conceive the work in question to be more than a security.

I can only say, with regard to yourself, that I am quite contented, and ought to be so, as long as you are sincere with me, and treat me in the same gentlemanly tone.

Very sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

This negotiation was ultimately brought to a conclusion by Mr. Hunt, at Mr. Murray's suggestion, disposing of the copyright of 'Rimini' to another publisher.

Mr. Murray had a good deal of correspondence with Madame de Staël. He had in 1813 published her 'L'Allemagne,' which was translated by F. Hodgson, edited by William Lamb, and excited a considerable sensation at the time. Napoleon was furious at its original publication at Paris, and ordered Savary, the Minister of Police, to seize the whole stock of 'L'Allemagne' at the Paris publishers, virtually hunted Madame de Staël from France, and had a strict watch kept upon her at Coppet, in Switzerland, whither she had retired for refuge. At length she contrived to escape, and went by way of Russia to England, where she superintended the translation and publication of her work.

Neither Byron nor Gifford had a very high opinion of Madame de Staël, though readers of Byron's letters are aware that in later years, when he came to know Italy, he saw reason to modify some of his criticisms, as, for instance, when he wrote in a note to Corinne, "I little thought that one day I should think with her thoughts, in the country where she has laid the scene of her most attractive production. She is sometimes right, and often wrong, about Italy and England; but almost always true in delineating the heart, which is of but one nation, and of no country; or, rather, of all."

Gifford wrote of her to Murray, when the question of publishing the translation of her 'L'Allemagne' was under consideration.

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

Ryde, July 12th, 1813.

"As to Madame de Staël, I can say nothing, and perhaps your bargain is off. At any rate, I can venture to assure you that the hope of keeping her from the press is quite vain. The family of Œdipus were not more haunted and goaded by the Furies than the Neckers, father, mother, and daughter, have always been by the demon of publication. Madame de Staël will therefore write and print without intermission. The volumes you were in treaty for promised to have something of novelty, and are besides well timed. Her *suicidal* work \* I have not yet looked at; but in a note I have had to-day from Mr. Wilmot, he proposes a short review of it."

The work was afterwards accepted and published by Mr. Murray, and succeeded tolerably well. During the time of her residence in London, Madame de Staël used frequently to dine with Mr. Murray, and was in the habit of writing short notes to him, of which the following are given as specimens. The first contains her proposed introduction to the forthcoming work :—

*Madame de Staël to John Murray.*

Lundi, Nov. 30, 1813.

Cet ouvrage sur les mœurs, la société, la littérature, la philosophie et la religion des Allemands, a été imprimé à dix milles exemplaires à Paris en 1810, et au moment où il allait paraître il a été supprimé par la police et tous les exemplaires mis en pièces. Un seul a échappé par hasard,

\* "Mdme. de Staël hath published an essay against Suicide, which I presume will make somebody shoot himself; as a sermon by Blenkinsop in proof of Christianity sent a hitherto most orthodox acquaintance of mine out of a chapel of ease a perfect atheist."—*Byron to Moore*, July 8th, 1803.

et c'est sur celui-là que Mr. John Murray a ré-imprimé l'ouvrage.

J'ai assez de chose à vous dire et à vous demander, my dear Sir. Un dîner de famille vous ennuyerait-il ? Et voulez-vous venir demain à 6 h. et demie chez moi ?

Mille compliments,

A. DE STAËL.

Bowood, near Calne, le 26 8bre, 1813.

Voilà la préface, my dear Sir, avec les corrections de Sir James que je vous prie de faire accepter. Je serai de retour à Londres vendredi 5 Novembre ; ainsi je vous prie de ne pas envoyer l'exemplaire du Prince Regent avant que je vous aye vu ; ce qui sera j'espère samedi matin, Argyle Street, No. 31.—Nous avons ici la plus intéressante réunion du monde, tout-à-fait digne du maître et de la maîtresse de la maison : on s'y parle beaucoup de vos procédés envers les hommes de lettres : j'entends Sir James [Mackintosh] et moi. Je vous demanderai un exemplaire à Dument, un à Rogers, et un à Lucien, à qui j'écrirai. Je souhait presque autant pour vous que pour moi le succès de mon ouvrage.

Mille compliments,

A. DE STAËL.

Mercredi, Sept. 15, 1813.

Je serai chez vous vendredi à cinq heures, my dear Sir. J'ai été charmée de Mr. Southey ; son âme et son esprit m'ont paru de la même force et dans le même sens. Il y a bien longtemps que je n'ai été chez vous, c'est à dire in the head-quarters of Mr. Canning.

Mille compliments,

A. DE STAËL.

Mille grâces du 'Corsaire ;' il y a de l'esprit beaucoup et de l'intérêt. Je vous attendrai un de ces matins avec Mr. Hamilton. Mille remerciements pour le roman de Mlle. Burney ! Et répondez-moi un de ces jours sur mes diverses

propositions à l'égard de M. Constant, lettres sur Rousseau, Delphine, &c. Parlez à Colburn, mais quand vous voudriez ; je ne suis pas pressée.

In 1814, after Napoleon's abdication, Madame de Staël returned to Paris, where she supported Louis XVIII. ; she remained there until after the final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, when she returned to Coppet, in Switzerland, and proceeded to prepare her final work for the press, 'Considérations sur la Révolution Française.'

On the 28th of June, 1816, the Baron de Staël wrote to Mr. Murray on the subject of his mother's work, 'Des Causes et des Effets de la Révolution Française.' He said that the plan had been extended, that it would be in three volumes, and that the work was calculated to produce a general sensation in Europe.

"From all this," he continued, "you must conceive that the offer you made of £2000 to my mother for the two first volumes is no more acceptable, since the book is extended to three, and contains two different works united in one. She therefore insists upon £4000, besides a credit in books for every new edition. . . . Another circumstance worthy of your consideration is, that the censure making it impossible to print the book in France, you will probably find the means of selling part of your edition in that country."

Murray having conferred with the Messrs. Longman on the subject, proposing that they should share it, replied as follows :—

*John Murray to Baron de Staël.*

DEAR SIR,

July 19th, 1816.

I have just returned to town after a sudden call to the country, after the receipt of your obliging letter, which I now answer in haste. You are not aware, I suppose, of the great changes which have taken place in the sale of everything in this country, which is operating to the

destruction of speculations of any kind. I am truly sorry to say that neither I, nor Mr. Longman conjointly with me, can venture upon the new work of Mad. de Staël at the sum which you mention; but we are desirous that the author should reap every fair advantage in case the work should succeed beyond our calculations: and we therefore propose to offer the sum of one thousand pounds for one edition of the work in French and one in English—we paying for the translation—each to consist of fifteen hundred copies; the sum to be paid at two months from the day on which we shall publish each edition; and for every future edition, of either the original or the Translation, to consist of one thousand copies, we engage to pay the sum of three hundred and fifty pounds after the sale of the one thousand copies. You have no conception of the total alteration since we have had the opportunity of emigrating to foreign countries, and I could not have made you this slender offer unless Messrs. Longman had agreed to take half the risk. I beg the favour of you to offer my compliments to Madame de Staël. I will have the pleasure of writing more at large in a few days when I shall send the account. In the meantime,

I remain, dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Madame de Staël was not satisfied with this letter. Mr. Murray had explained that her work '*L'Allemagne*' had not been so satisfactory as she supposed; nevertheless, she urged that the proposed work was likely to be much more attractive to the public—especially the third volume, which would

"Contain a picture of all your public characters. I don't question," she said, through the pen of her son, the Baron de Staël (28th December, 1816), "the exactitude of the statement which you give me of the returns of '*L'Allemagne*': but whatever it be, I don't hesitate to say that I should think it a good speculation to pay for the grandest work

the double of what you paid to the former ; considering, besides, that you have the privilege for the translation as well as of the original. In short, the only reduction which I think my mother would agree to is the sum of £2500 for her volumes, that Sir J. Mackintosh had been commissioned by you to propose to her two years ago.

“A. STAËL DE G.”

Madame de Staël died in the following year (14th July, 1817), and the work in question was not published until 1818. A few days after her death Mr. J. W. Ward (afterwards Lord Dudley) wrote to Mr. Murray :—

*The Honble. J. W. Ward to John Murray.*

July 17th, 1817.

“I saw poor Madame de Staël four days before she died. She was looking wretchedly ill, and showed indications of great languor and weakness. But her understanding was quite unimpaired. She evidently thought very ill of her own situation, though at the same time she had no notion how near she was to her end. There is a story here (Paris), that just at last she was reconciled to the Church of Rome, chiefly, it is said, by the persuasion of Viscount Montgomery. Perhaps, too, Mr. Schlegel contributed his influence to this event. He had already set the example. I do not know the fact for certain, but I think it is not improbable. I also understand that it now appears she had been for some time married to Mr. Rocca. I do not know in what state of forwardness her book was ; but I should hope that a part of it at least was fit for publication.”

After his mother's death, Baron de Staël continued his negotiations with Mr. Murray, but no satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at, and the work was in the end published by Messrs. Baldwin and Cradock.

Another lady who was to be enrolled on the list of Mr. Murray's most successful authoresses was the daughter of



Rear-Admiral Dundas, then the wife of Captain Graham, R.N., nephew of James Graham, author of 'The Sabbath.' Mr. Murray had sent her a copy of the *Quarterly*, and received the following reply :—

*Mrs. Graham to John Murray.*

Broughty Ferry, December 9th, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

I conclude that the *Quarterly Review* and Miss Williams' account of France, which I have lately received from the Foreign Office, are from you. I assure you that both are most acceptable in this retired place ; between which and the nearest court of Modern Literature lie the two formidable waters which keep this corner of Angus at least a century behind other places in the known civilized world. It is true that the ruins of Cardinal Beaton's tower, and the Cathedral and College of St. Andrews, are visible from our windows ; but they carry one back only to times of violence and civil war, and make one expect to hear more particulars of Huntley's conspiracy, or of Mary's weakness, and Knox's hard justice, while you are listening to tales from Paris of oppressed people and king, and spoiled galleries and humbled conquerors, and imprisoned Emperors, and things just, and but just, remembered here, where a weekly paper at most connects us with the news of the southern world. But we have books and a garden, and, like all poor people, plenty of occupation for our hands, and even heads, that we may live and not lose caste, which in this poor, proud country, where Montrose and Dundee are still in the mouths of the people, is even more difficult than in most parts of the southern portion of the Island. Our establishment here consists of our two selves, a sister of Graham's, two women, two dogs, and some poultry ; and our cottage is large enough to entertain a friend ; so that in spite of peace and half pay we are far better off than most of our brother officers. The dogs and gun furnish an excuse for a great deal of walking to the Captain, and the garden for a good deal of exercise to me ; but as to a party, either for a dinner, or an evening, or a morning visit, they are things quite unknown and un-

thought of. It is a *better* life than a London one, perhaps, and if it has fewer pleasures, it has fewer cares and disappointments; for we know to a certainty who we shall sit by at dinner, and which portion of our book of last night will either divert or weary us to-night, unless indeed the morning's post brings such a variety as this morning produced, from any kind person who happens to remember our existence here. Our best thanks, and believe me to be always,

Your much obliged,

MARIA GRAHAM.

Some years afterwards Mrs. Graham visited London, and called upon Mr. Murray. She was exceedingly anxious that her husband should leave his half pay, and be again put in command of a ship. Murray promised to help her so far as he could, and to this end he invited Croker, then Secretary to the Admiralty, to dine at Albemarle Street, and arranged to place Mrs. Graham by his side, in order that she might have an opportunity of stating her views as to the reappointment of her husband. Murray had not fully taken into account that Mrs. Graham was not only a Whig, but a high-spirited woman, who did not hold back her opinions—nor did Croker hold back his—and the consequence was that they got into collision about politics. At the close of the dinner, Croker said to Murray's son, John, "Run down for a copy of the *Navy List*, and bring it here." After it had been brought, Croker looked through the list, and found the name of Graham. Murray thought he had intended to put a black mark after his name, in consequence of what had occurred; but on the contrary, Croker, who liked a woman of spirit, took occasion to speak in Captain Graham's favour; and he was shortly after appointed to the command of the *Doris*, and made a voyage, with Mrs. Graham on board,

in the Mediterranean. Captain Graham was afterwards ordered to the coast of Brazil, whence Mrs. Graham addressed many interesting letters to her friends in Albemarle Street. Some time after the death of Captain Graham, R.N., she married Mr., afterwards Sir Augustus, Callcott, R.A. Although she had before published some interesting books—such as ‘An Account of her Travels in India,’ her ‘Three Months in the Environs of Rome,’ her ‘History of Spain,’ and several works on Art,—her most popular and best read work was ‘Little Arthur’s History of England,’ many hundred thousand copies of which have by this time been printed and published.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THOMAS CAMPBELL—JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE—  
JAMES HOGG, ETC.

THOMAS CAMPBELL appeared like a meteor as early as 1799, when, in his twenty-second year, he published his 'Pleasures of Hope.' The world was taken by surprise at the vigour of thought and richness of fancy displayed in the poem. Shortly after its publication, Campbell went to Germany, and saw, from the Scottish Monastery of St. James', the battle of Hohenlinden. On his return to Scotland, he published the beautiful lines beginning, "On Linden when the sun was low." In 1801 he composed 'The Exile of Erin,' and 'Ye Mariners of England.' The 'Battle of the Baltic,' and 'Locheil's Warning' followed; and in 1803 he published an edition of his poems. To have composed such noble lyrics was almost unprecedented in so young a man; for he was only twenty-six years of age when his collected edition appeared. He was treated as a lion, and became acquainted with Walter Scott and the leading men in Edinburgh. In December 1805 we find Constable writing to Murray, that Longman and Co. had offered the young poet £700 for a new volume of his poems.

Murray soon became intimate with Campbell, though he was kept waiting for many long years for the 'Selections from British Poets,' with an introductory memoir

of each, which Campbell had agreed to write for him. The first idea of such a work occurred to Campbell in 1805, and he communicated his views to Walter Scott, through whom negotiations with Ballantyne and Cadell were opened ; and though they were broken off for a time, Campbell pursued his idea. Soon after his first introduction to Murray he removed to London, taking up his residence at Sydenham.

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

February 28th, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

I very much regret that an indisposition which, though slight, is not such as will permit me to make a journey to town, must prevent me from what would be no small pleasure, the forming of your more intimate acquaintance by a friendly meeting to-day. I console myself, however, on my absence from your agreeable party with the idea that I was invited to it. I also feel unfeigned pleasure at the prospect of seeing you at any future time without the reserve of unacquainted people. I am not a little flattered at your expression of so much good disposition on my behalf. . . . I should bid you to see me at Sydenham if it were not winter ; but in summer I hope you will not unfrequently see, Sir,

Yours, with great respect,

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

One of the earliest results of the association of Campbell with Murray was a proposal to start a new magazine, which Murray had long contemplated. This, it will be observed, was some years before the communications took place between Walter Scott and Murray with respect to the starting of the *Quarterly*. After the meeting Mr. Campbell wrote to Mr. Murray as follows :—

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

March 3rd, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

As I put down in my own memorandum book all the desultory ideas respecting the new publication which we have in contemplation that occur to me, I think it may not be improper to transmit them to you also. You will be so good as to pardon the unsystematic appearance which those ideas must have, but which I trust will alter for the better as our scheme gets ripen, and nearer being put in execution.

I have thought on many respectable names (since I had the pleasure of your society), of persons who, I think, may in all probability be brought to lend us their aid. Although our scheme is not scientific, yet a very pleasant mixture of science may enter it, and I have recollected since we met that Charles Bell, of Edinburgh, has come to London to settle—a man of really superior genius, as his forthcoming publication will show. I think we shall get something from him on his own favourite pursuit, the anatomy of painting.

Alison, the author of 'Essays on Taste,' is my particular friend. I am pretty sure he will give me important support. John Allen, a most admirably ingenious man, will assist me in a track of study which I mean immediately and eagerly to pursue—Spanish literature, as the little knowledge I possess of it may be easily improved, into what may usefully promote our magazine.

Professor Playfair, an elegant writer as well as philosopher, will contribute, I know, with my other northern friends, to give some *éclat* to our work. There are names I forgot to mention to you. Miss Baillie, I hope, will also give us a bit of poetry now and then. I have the honour to be her particular acquaintance.

Let us by all means keep our scheme to ourselves till *great* aids are *quite secure*—till we are ready to step forward before the public without a hem or an apology, but boldly, and as becomes men conscious of deserving notice. I dread of all things the hue and cry getting up before we are ready. I trust, however, implicitly in the great degree of judgment and discretion which I know you to possess.

Let us also, my dear Sir, while we court *great aids*, keep ourselves disentangled from little ones. It is an invidious thing to hunt down tolerable though second-rate writers. It is breaking the peace and wounding their feelings by severe sayings or writings in public ; but when our fame and fortune are staked on a plan like this, we must have no second-rates—especially in poetry.

In your plan of the ancient classics I feel myself warmly interested. I shall take very great pleasure indeed in every opportunity that you give me of suggesting what some fourteen years' experience in the original and translated authors may make of use to the plan. I have little doubt also, that I could put you on a plan of supplying the "hiatuses" in poetical translation. These thoughts come at random.

From your very respectful and sincerely obliged,

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

The projected magazine seems, however, to have dropped out of sight, and Campbell then reverted to his proposed 'Lives of the British Poets, with Selections from their Writings.' Toward the close of the year he addressed the following letter to Mr. Scott :—

*Mr. T. Campbell to Mr. Scott.*

November 5th, 1806.

MY DEAR SCOTT,

A very excellent and gentlemanlike man—albeit a bookseller—Murray, of Fleet Street, is willing to give for our joint 'Lives of the Poets,' on the plan we proposed to the trade a twelvemonth ago, a thousand pounds. For my part, I think the engagement very desirable, and have no uneasiness on the subject, except my fear that you may be too much engaged to have to do with it, as five hundred pounds may not be to you the temptation that it appears to a poor devil like myself. Murray is the only gentleman, except Constable, in the trade ;—I may also, perhaps, except Hood. I have seldom seen a pleasanter man to deal with. I foresee no chance of our disagreeing about the minuter arrangements, should the affair proceed. I

think our choice of the lives for each would not be likely to set you and me by the ears. And, what makes me excessively desirous of the engagement, independent of its being pleasant work and good reward, is that it would probably fix me beside you in Edinburgh. . . . Our names are what Murray principally wants—*yours* in particular. The size, the manner, the time, and the whole arrangement of this work will be in our hands. . . . For my own part, I am not assuming any mock modesty, when I say that, so thankful shall I be to have an engagement to the amount of £500, that I will think no effort too great to show my sense of the good fortune to be associated with you in the undertaking. I have too much respect for you, and for myself, to importune you to join names with me ; but I cannot disguise that I am deeply anxious for your answer. I will not wish, even in confidence, to say anything ill of the London booksellers *beyond their deserts* ; but I assure you that, to compare this offer of Murray's with their usual offers, it is magnanimous indeed. Longman and Rees, and a few of the *great* booksellers, have literally monopolised the trade, and the business of literature is getting a dreadful one indeed. The Row folks have done nothing for me yet ; I know not what they intend. The fallen prices of literature—which is getting worse by the horrible complexion of the times—make me often rather gloomy at the life I am likely to lead. You may guess, therefore, my anxiety to close with this proposal ; and you may think me charitable indeed to restrain myself from wishing that you were as poor as myself, that you might have motives to lend your aid.

Scott entered into Campbell's agreement with kindness and promptitude, and it was arranged, under certain stipulations, that the plan should have his zealous co-operation ; but as the number and importance of his literary engagements increased, he declined to take an active part either in the magazine or the other undertaking. The loss of Scott's name seems to have been fatal to the progress of the periodical, but Campbell continued to hold to his idea of preparing 'Selections from the British



Poets.' Communications took place between Constable and Murray on the subject, Campbell proposing that Constable should be the publisher. Murray replied to Constable's letter (19th December, 1806):—

"I saw Campbell two days ago, and he told me that Mr. Scott had declined, and modestly asked if it would do by *himself* alone; but this I declined in a way that did not leave us the less friends."

Campbell continued writing about the publication of his work to Constable, who seems to have disregarded his letters. Then he wrote to Mr. Jeffrey, who gave him no answer. At last he wrote to Henry (afterwards Lord) Cockburn, expressing his regret at Constable's and Jeffrey's silence, and requesting his intercession. "If Jeffrey does not take any interest in this affair of the 'Selections,' will you do me the kindness to call upon Mr. Constable and request an answer?" But no answer came; and Campbell was at length driven back upon Mr. Murray. The friendship between them grew closer, and Campbell was a frequent guest at Murray's literary parties. To one of these invitations he replied:—

*Mr. Campbell to John Murray.*

April 9th, 1807.

DEAR MURRAY,

I do assure you that none of your present guests (not even excepting the landlord!) will more sincerely regret than I do the absence of that worthy gentleman, myself, from your expected and pleasant party. But the unforeseen event being no less than a summons from his Majesty's deputy-lieutenant to answer respecting my free-will and consent to be draughted by the Training Act to serve (should it please His Majesty—God bless him) in a regiment of the Line, the absence of my company among the deputy-lieutenants might be attended with still more unpleasant consequences than absenting myself from your

party. I hear you are to have Scott, whose address I have unfortunately lost. If he should dine with you I shall be much obliged if you will present my respects to him and tell him to remember Sydenham. I wish I could have been among you, but you see what comes of the Training Act. Mrs. Campbell joins me in best respects to Mrs. Murray. Believe me, dear Murray,

Truly yours,

THOS. CAMPBELL.

At length, after many communications and much personal intercourse, Murray agreed with Campbell to bring out his work, without the commanding name of Walter Scott, and with the name of Thomas Campbell alone as Editor of the 'Selections from the British Poets.' The arrangement seems to have been made towards the end of 1808. Campbell's letter describes the nature of the proposed work :—

*Mr. Campbell to John Murray.*

January 28th, 1809.

I am inclined to believe that the more popular form of the 'Elegant Extracts' is the best adapted for our work. It is surely a fair competition in which we shall start, with that ill-constructed but as I understand very saleable compilation. With respect to the form of the work, however, I feel myself an incompetent adviser. I am confident enough in my power to make the merit of the book independent of its form. Its title I should call 'The Selected Beauties of British Poetry, with lives of the Poets and Critical Dissertations. By T. C.,' &c. This titlepage, however, may be arranged at our leisure. I begin with Chaucer, and continue through the whole succession of English Poets to the last of our own day. Many lives, and of course criticisms annexed to these lives, will be included which are not found in any preceding collection. Many anonymous Poems must also be inserted, with merely a notice of the name to which they are attributed, upon grounds too uncertain to admit of a Biography.

Already I have done much in bringing together a number of excellent little poems which have been but partially noticed—known only to amateurs, and transcribed in their commonplace books, but most of them rarely, and some of them never, introduced into collections of Poetry. The bulk of these need not alarm you for the space they will occupy, as it is the common quality of excellence not to be bulky; but though these little stars of poetical excellence may be individually small, I hope they will form a brilliant constellation.

My Biographies I mean to be short, but I dare say you will remember that shortness is not always incompatible with being satisfactory. By short I don't mean scanty. Where the merit of the Poet is not very interesting, I will endeavour to make his biography more interesting. Extreme accuracy I trust I shall always attain—indeed, with the prospect of such aid as you are so kind as to promise me, I need not fear falling into errors with the industry I propose to exert. At the same time I do not promise you a book of antiquarian dissertation. I mean to exert the main part of my strength on the merits and writings of each Poet as an Author, not on discoveries of little anecdotes, and of his residence and conversation as a man, unless such things are striking, and can be obtained without sacrificing the great object of my efforts, viz. to make a complete body of English Poetical Criticism. The Poets are all to be reviewed in their chronological succession, but both in my preface and in my biographies I mean to class the minor poets in the different orders of their general merit and particular characteristics. To the great Poets, such as Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Dryden, Pope and Thomson, I devote a separate and elaborate disquisition, treating them as they deserve, like great writers, having nothing in common but their greatness.

I mean to devote a year exclusively to this effort. It is not my part to say any more than I have said (I hope it will not appear immodestly) on my own competency to the task. I shall only add that I have written a good deal on the subject matter of it, and read and thought a great deal more. Independent of my duty as a fair dealer, which I trust would always deter me from performing a task in a slovenly manner, where the capital of an

employer is risked and employed, I have every motive that can stimulate to industry, and that can make me anxious without being intimidated about the public opinion. With great respect and regard, believe me, dear Murray,

Your sincere friend,

T. CAMPBELL.

Fortified with these admirable resolutions, Campbell proceeded with his work, but the labour it involved was perhaps greater than he had anticipated. It was his first important prose work; and prose requires continuous labour. It cannot, like a piece of poetry, be thrown off at a heat while the fit is on.

Moreover, Campbell stopped occasionally in the midst of his work to write poems, by which he hoped to subsist. It is true he had already, in his twenty-eighth year, obtained a pension of £200 a year; but this was not enough. In 1809 he published his 'Gertrude of Wyoming' and other poems, which confirmed his poetical reputation. Murray sent a copy of the volume to Walter Scott, and requested a review for the *Quarterly*, which was then in its first year. What Campbell thought of the review will appear from the following letter:—

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

June 2nd, 1809.

MY DEAR MURRAY,

I received the review, for which I thank you, and beg leave through you to express my best acknowledgments to the unknown reviewer. I do not by this mean to say that I think every one of his censures just. On the contrary, if I had an opportunity of personal conference with so candid and sensible a man, I think I could in some degree acquit myself of a part of the faults he has found. But altogether I am pleased with his manner, and very proud of his approbation. He reviews like a gentleman, a Christian, and a scholar.

Although the 'Lives of the Poets' had been promised within a year from January 1809, four years had passed, and the work was still far from completion.

In the meantime Campbell undertook to give a course of eleven Lectures on Poetry at the Royal Institution, for which he received a hundred guineas. He enriched his Lectures with the Remarks and Selections collected for the 'Specimens,' for which the publisher had agreed to pay a handsome sum. The result was a momentary hesitation on the part of Mr. Murray to risk the publication of the work. On this, says Campbell's biographer, a correspondence ensued between the poet and the publisher, which ended to the satisfaction of both. Mr. Murray only requested that Mr. Campbell should proceed with greater alacrity in finishing the long projected work. It is only right, however, to give the poet's letter to Mr. Murray in reference to his application for payment on account:—

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

January 29th, 1814.

DEAR MURRAY,

I will finish your work, and never more trouble you on the subject of money. What I sought was not as a matter of right, but of pure favour. I am sorry it has annoyed you. You are bound to forgive me, I think, when I say that I regret the application. You have a right to refuse me on the score of a legal claim, but you do me some injustice in stating the grounds of your right of refusal. It is because my work is unfinished that this just denial must be admitted by me, but you should not found it on a circumstance which never existed—that of my having used your library for the purpose of other undertakings. Brewster, whose articles \* I agreed to write by your express sanction before beginning our work, gave me a full order upon his bookseller, Richardson, for all books necessary for his biographies. They were, from the nature of the articles,

\* For the 'Edinburgh Encyclopædia.'

very few and of slight importance. Again, out of eleven lectures delivered at the Royal Institution, only two were upon the subjects of our 'Criticisms': the other nine were upon the philosophy of poetry, the Spanish, French, and Greek drama, and even upon our own dramatic writers, respecting whom I had not a single volume to assist me among your books.

The lengthened delay of the work has been occasioned by the nature of its materials, which lie so diversely scattered, that with all your zeal and liberality, and my own exertions, it has been physically impossible to collect them into one mass at one time. The other things on which I have been engaged have been resorted to as the mere supports of my family at certain intervals when I saw my finances near a close, and found that by the utmost progress I could make in our work, I could not have a just claim on you in time enough for my necessities. I wrote, not to ask from you or to annoy you, but to vindicate myself for past delays. Believe me, they have not been voluntary. Even now I believe I shall be obliged to cast about for some scheme of lecturing to make money wherewith to finish the 'Criticisms,' or at least to stand out the time when I shall be engaged in correcting the proofs, which I should not wish to be put too hastily off. I do not by this mean to insinuate the slightest wish again to trouble you. I feel that your refusal is perfectly just.

I thank you for expressing a wish that we should continue friends. I meet it cordially. I trust that the entire MSS. will convince you that instead of the Lectures starving the 'Criticisms,' they have enriched them much. The tone of our future intercourse will depend on your reception of this letter.

I remain, disposed as ever,

To be sincerely, &c., yours,

T. CAMPBELL.

The following is Mr. Murray's answer:—

*John Murray to Mr. T. Campbell.*

Mr. Davison (the printer) has some Government work, which has engrossed him too much of late. He now

promises to put all his force upon the 'Specimens,' and to make up for his recent delays. I take the opportunity of assuring you how much I feel obliged by the labour which you are now bestowing upon the 'Lives,' which have become very interesting, and cannot fail to do you honour. I will send you Hayley's 'Cowper;' it affords material for a very long and a peculiarly interesting life,—in which you can weave innumerable passages of great beauty from his letters, and all the touching part of the life written by himself. I assure you I think, when you have given scope to yourself, that your prose is not to be surpassed. I expect very very *great* things in your 'Life of Burns.' Don't be afraid of room.

Most truly yours,

JOHN MURRAY.

On June 19th, 1815, Campbell writes:—

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

"I condole with you very much on the misfortune of my being absent from your party on Friday; but still more with myself, since instead of having the honour of imbibing your wine, I had the honour of spending the day in profuse perspiration between blankets, and giving out more humidity than I could have possibly taken in if I had been drinking wine with you."

The book was still long in coming out. The patience of author and publisher were alike exhausted. More letters passed between them. Many books were required, and sent to Sydenham. After the lapse of two years, the following letter was sent by Campbell to Murray:—

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

April 28th, 1818.

I am divided in my opinion as to the quantity of extracts I should give from Goldsmith. Upon the whole, I think the 'Deserted Village' and 'Traveller' are so beautiful that they should not be broken up; but I don't like to direct their being printed without its meeting your ideas of the

work. You are in reality likely to judge much more accurately than I can do of the problem I have stated. If you can spare but a snatched moment to say Yes or No as to the whole or a part, I shall be obliged to you. I confess I should lean strongly to giving them entire.

Yours very faithfully,

T. CAMPBELL.

The books were sent. The work was now approaching completion, and at length, about the beginning of 1819, fourteen years after the project had been mentioned to Walter Scott, and about ten years after the book should have appeared, according to Campbell's original promise, the 'Essays and Selections of English Poetry' were published by Mr. Murray. The work was well received. The poet was duly paid for it, and Dr. Beattie, Campbell's biographer, says he "found himself in the novel position of a man who has money to lay out at interest." It will be evident, however, from the following letter, that this statement must be received with considerable deduction. His final letter is:—

*Mr. T. Campbell to John Murray.*

March 28th, 1819.

DEAR MURRAY,

After having been so kindly accommodated by you, I am afraid you will think me very troublesome in the present application, but on settling my account with Messrs. Longman & Co.,\* I find to my dismay that I have drawn so much from them as to leave me nothing for the payment of many debts which yet remain against me. Before the last two hundred pounds, I had received, according to my memorandum, four hundred on account of the 'Specimens.' I have then in all had six. Of the four

\* Longman & Co. were the publishers of Campbell's collected 'Poems.'



remaining hundred which you have been so liberal as to destine for me, I am not anxious for the one half sooner than it may be perfectly convenient ; but if it were not troublesome to you, I should esteem it a very great favour to be allowed to draw upon you in small sums which I owe in London to the amount of two hundred. You would possibly also indulge me so far as to let my creditors present their cheques, which I should give them (in the event of receiving your permission for this arrangement) at your house. If this, however, should be in the least disagreeable, I hope you will frankly tell me so.

I have already thanked you in person, but feel it due to repeat my acknowledgments for your very handsome and liberal allowance for the 'Specimens' beyond our formal contract. It would be the most avaricious and unreasonable spirit in me not to be perfectly satisfied with the honourable and gentlemanlike spirit which you have shown in estimating my remuneration. What I have to say in apology for thus applying to you sooner than I meant to have done, cannot possibly be misunderstood as at variance in the slightest degree with my sense of absolute obligation to you ; but as an apology for this application I feel it no excuse to state that the time which I devoted to the 'Specimens' has involved me very much in debt. I discovered in truth too late that it was a work which none but an author who possessed an independent fortune, or a collection of books such as Mr. Heber's, should have undertaken ; and that it was impossible in the nature of things that it could remunerate either you or myself at the first edition. I saw through my difficulties, however, so far as to anticipate that, having conquered the first edition, it would ultimately be capable of yielding advantage to both in subsequent editions.\* It is a great thing to have made myself master of the subject and acquainted with the books that relate to all its most important parts. On the scheme which you suggested regarding the 'Dramatic Poets,' I shall have the pleasure of talking with you fully when we meet.

The length of this letter need not frighten you, as it will require but a very short answer. Whatever answer that should be (and I have not the slightest objection to be treated with a frank refusal if my request should be incon-

\* The second edition appeared in 1841, in one thick volume, 8vo.

venient), may I only beg that you will have the goodness to send it soon.

With sincerity, I remain, your obliged friend,

T. CAMPBELL.

Mr. Murray complied with Mr. Campbell's request, and paid the money for the cheques presented, as he had desired. It appears that besides the £1000, which was double the sum originally proposed to be paid to Campbell for the 'Selections,' Mr. Murray, in October 1819, paid him £200 "for books," doubtless for those he had purchased for the 'Collections,' and which he desired to retain.

We cannot conclude this account of Campbell's dealing with Murray without referring to an often-quoted story which has for many years sailed under false colours. It was Thomas Campbell who wrote "Now Barabbas was a publisher," whether in a Bible or otherwise is not authentically recorded, and forwarded it to a friend; but Mr. Murray was not the publisher to whom it referred, nor was Lord Byron, as has been so frequently stated, the author of the joke.

While Campbell's 'Selections' were in slow and gradual progress through the press, Scott was throwing off his poems and novels with extraordinary rapidity; Murray had a share with Blackwood in some of the novels, but a number of other important works demanded his attention. Byron was now at the height of his fame; Southey was producing his works with prolific rapidity. Milman was beginning to issue his poems and dramas; Malthus was publishing his works on Rent and the Corn Laws; and numerous works on Voyages and Travels, on Philosophy, on Classics, on Antiquities, were issuing from the house in Albemarle Street. Murray himself was the head and front of the whole negotiations and corre-

spondence. The great burden of the correspondence entailed by the *Quarterly Review* now fell on him, for Gifford was physically incapable of bearing it. On the other hand, Croker and Barrow were becoming more and more active helpers of the publisher in this branch of his responsibilities.

On one of Gifford's letters we find these words in Murray's handwriting: "By mistake I had made his draft for No. 29, £125 instead of £150. I sent the difference with an apology." Gifford's answer was as follows:—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

August 11th, 1816.

"I have always found you liberal and generous, and have rather feared for you than for myself. I am always safe in your hands. I shall set out to-morrow with my damsel at a very early hour. Phyllis has taken a little lodging for me at Dover, which she says is full. I rejoice in the sale of yesterday, as I shall in any success of yours."

Gifford was nothing the better for his stay at Dover. Shortly after his return he wrote to Murray from James Street, Buckingham Gate (1st Sept., 1816):—

"I am now suffering from confirmed jaundice. This is quite a novelty to me. My head is as heavy as lead, and I can do nothing. You never saw such a wretch as I appear—green and yellow, and every colour but the right one. They give me a quantity of nauseous stuff, and tell me it is for my good! Two or three days must, I think, decide what I am to hope. Meanwhile I can do nothing."

Like the creaking gate that hangs long on its hinges, Gifford continued to live, though painfully. He became gradually better, and in the following month Mr. Murray presented him with a chariot, by means of which he might

drive about and take exercise in the open air. Gifford answered :—

“I have a thousand thanks to give you for the pains you have taken about the carriage, without which I should only have talked about it, and died of a cold. It came home yesterday, and I went to Fulham in it. It is everything that I could wish, neat, easy, and exceedingly comfortable.”

Gifford's edition of ‘Ben Jonson’ came out about this time, for he added :

“I am really gratified by your opinion of poor ‘Ben,’ but you must read some of his plays—‘The Fox,’ ‘The Alchemist’—miraculous things—and some of the minor pieces, ‘The Vision of Delight,’ &c.”

Among the other works published by Mr. Murray in 1816 a few more remain to be mentioned. Mr. John Cam Hobhouse, afterwards Lord Broughton, wrote to Murray from Whitton Park as to the publication of his Letters from Paris during the last reign of Napoleon. Mr. Hobhouse had already appeared as an author, principally in his ‘Journey through Albania and other Provinces of Turkey, with Lord Byron,’ which was published in 1812. In the case of his ‘Last Reign of Napoleon’ he informed Mr. Murray that he desired the book to be published without his name, at least at first, but he did not object to the publisher informing any inquirer who was the author.

*Mr. Hobhouse to John Murray.*

January, 1816.

“Tell me when your press is ready, and you shall have the MS. by five or six sheets at a time. I shall correct the press, and I must also premise that when the whole is completed, I must have the liberty of cancelling what sheets I please, for a reason that I now tell you in the strictest confidence: the Letters are to go to Paris previously to publication, and are to be read carefully

through by a most intimate friend of mine, who was entirely in the secrets of the late Imperial Ministry, and who will point out any statements as to facts, in which he could from his *knowledge* make any necessary change."

The book was published in 2 vols. 8vo., and created a considerable sensation at the time. The first edition was rapidly exhausted, and Hobhouse offered a second to Murray, proposing at the same time to insert his name as author on the title-page.

"If I do," he said, "I shall present the book to Lord Byron in due form, not for his talents as a poet, but for his qualities as a companion and a friend. I should not write 'My dear Byron,' *à la Hunt*."\*

Meanwhile Mr. D'Israeli was busy with his 'Inquiry into the Literary and Political Character of James the First.' He wrote to his publisher as follows :—

*Mr. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

May, 1816.

DEAR MURRAY,

Pray does 'James' advance with you? Is there a second sheet? If so I should like to have it. Mr. Gifford will give it a reading no doubt. I am sorry to say every one I have mentioned the subject to revolts from it as a thing quite untenable, and cares nothing about 'James.' This does not stop me from finishing. The weather and other things confine me to the house.

Yours always,

I. D'I.

Mr. Croker, in the midst of his work at the Admiralty, his articles for the *Quarterly* and his other literary labours, found time to write his 'Stories for Children from the

\* Leigh Hunt had dedicated his 'Rimini' to the noble poet, addressing him as "My dear Byron."

History of England.' In sending the later stories Mr. Croker wrote to Mr. Murray:—

*The Rt. Hon. J. W. Croker to John Murray.*

"I send you seven stories, which, with eleven you had before, brings us down to Richard III., and as I do not intend to come down beyond the Revolution, there remain nine stories still. I think you told me that you gave the first stories to your little boy to read. Perhaps you or Mrs. Murray would be so kind as to make a mark over against such words as he may not have understood, and to favour me with any criticism the child may have made, for on this occasion I should prefer a critic of 6 years old to one of 60."

Thus John Murray's son, the present Mr. Murray, was early initiated into the career of reading for the press. When the book came out it achieved a great success, and set the model for Walter Scott in his charming 'Tales of my Grandfather.'

It may be mentioned that 'Croker's Stories for Children' were published on the system of division of profits. Long after, when Mr. Murray was in correspondence with an author who wished him to pay a sum of money down before he had even seen the manuscript, the publisher recommended the author to publish his book on a division of profits, in like manner as Hallam, Milman, Mahon, Croker, and others had done. "Under this system," he said, "I have been very successful. For Mr. Croker's 'Stories from the History of England,' selling for 2s. 6d., if I had offered the small sum of twenty guineas, he would have thought it liberal. However, I printed it to divide profits, and he has already received from me the moiety of £1400. You will perhaps be startled at my assertion; for woeful experience convinces me that not more than one

publication in fifty has a sale sufficient to defray its expenses."

Sir John Malcolm was a great friend of Murray's. When home from India in 1816, he dined often at Albemarle Street, where he made the acquaintance of Lord Byron, Campbell, Rogers, Hallam, and others. Murray published his 'History of Persia,' one of his greatest works. On his return to India, the ship in which he had embarked was lying in the Downs, waiting for a fair wind down Channel, when he wrote the following parting letter:—

*Sir John Malcolm to John Murray.*

Deal, October 16th, 1816.

DEAR MURRAY,

I have waited to the last, that I might condense all my *say* into one short sheet. To begin, I have had every reason to be satisfied with your conduct towards me on all occasions, and, what is more, I am quite convinced I must have always the same feelings on this score, as the motives and principles on which you act can never give rise to any other. I was as surprised as gratified when I went on board the *Miles*, at your handsome present of amusement for the passage, and sincerely thank you. I shall neither forget you nor Mr. Gifford. The packet for the latter will be sent from the Cape, if it please God we reach that port. Colonel Worsley has the work prepared for the printer. It is very curious to all who take any interest in India, and to officers in India quite an invaluable work.

The latter portion of the letter probably refers to his 'Instructions to Young Officers,' which he had left ready for the press.

The success of Scott's, and especially of Byron's Poems, called into existence about this time a vast array of would-be poets, male and female, and from all ranks and professions. Some wrote for fame, some for money; but all were agreed on one point, namely that if Mr. Murray

would undertake the publication of the poems the authors' fame was secured: "that their works would excite the admiration of the world," or that "the author would become independent and celebrated throughout Great Britain."

Mr. Murray was inundated with productions of this kind, but could usually dispose of them without troubling his literary advisers. The authors of these rejected addresses did not always take the publisher's decision in good part, and not a few retaliated by round, personal abuse.

This, however, was not generally the case. When Miss Jane Porter sent him a poem—'Lord Ronald, by a Border Minstrel,'—and asked him to peruse it with a view to publication, he informed the lady (July 12th, 1817) that he had "*waded through seven hundred rejected poems in the course of a year.*" The lady assented to his view, and willingly took back the manuscript.

When Mr. Murray was in doubt about any manuscript, he usually conferred with Croker, Campbell, or Gifford, who always displayed the utmost kindness in helping him with their opinions. Croker was usually short and pithy. Of one poem he said: "Trash—the dullest stuff I ever read." This was enough to ensure the condemnation of the manuscript. Campbell, when sending his "confidential opinion on the poem of 'Woman,'" \* said, "In my opinion, though there are many excellent lines in it, the poem is not such as will warrant a great sum being speculated upon it. But, as it is short, I think the public, not the author or publisher, will be in fault if it does not sell one edition."

Of a poem sent for his opinion, Gifford wrote:—

"Honestly, the MS. is totally unfit for the press. Do not deceive yourself: this MS. is not the production of a

\* Most probably Mrs. Hemans' 'Records of Woman.'



male. A man may write as great nonsense as a woman, and even greater; but a girl may pass through those execrable abodes of ignorance, called boarding schools, without learning whether the sun sets in the East or in the West, whereas a boy can hardly do this, even at Parson's Green."

The following letter may be given from John Wilson, then an advocate at Edinburgh, afterwards Professor of Moral Philosophy, relating to the second edition of his 'City of the Plague':—

*Mr. John Wilson to John Murray.*

December 18th, 1815.

"Circumstances connected with my professional duties have prevented me from returning an answer to your letter. . . . I have by this day's mail-coach sent to you the only copy which I possess of the 'City of the Plague.' I have relinquished the idea of publishing a larger volume, and now offer you that single dramatic poem by itself, and, if you choose, a few smaller ones of a different character, to make up the volume to 170 or 180 pages. If you think the Poem worth £100, and a dozen copies to the author, the copyright of it is yours; if not, you will return me the manuscript as soon as possible. You will peruse it yourself, and request Lord Byron to give you his opinion. I do not mention his name from believing that he entertains a favourable idea of my poetical character, as indeed I have some reason to think the contrary. But as he is a man of power and genius, I know that in his hands my poem will have the certainty of a fair trial by a good judge."

It appears that Murray declined Wilson's offer of his poem. A few days later Murray communicated his views to Blackwood of Edinburgh, when Blackwood replied:—

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

January 1st, 1816.

"Wilson is a very extraordinary kind of person: he is a man of strong mind and powerful talents, but so *outré* and

unsettled, that one never can be sure of his having taken sufficient pains upon anything. You have probably done right in declining his poem, though I have no doubt of there being a great deal of genius in it; and that, if he were to take more pains, he is perfectly capable of producing a beautiful and interesting poem."

This was the Edinburgh publisher's view—no doubt a true one. Yet John Wilson (afterwards known as Christopher North) proved one of his best friends,—especially in the establishment of *Blackwood's Magazine*; with which Murray himself was for a time connected.

James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, was another of Murray's Scottish correspondents, with whom he had some interesting intercourse.

The publication of 'The Queen's Wake' in 1813 immediately brought Hogg into connection with the leading authors and publishers of the day. Hogg sent a copy of the volume to Lord Byron, his "brother poet," whose influence he desired to enlist on behalf of a work which Hogg wished Murray to publish.

The poem which the Ettrick Shepherd referred to was 'The Pilgrims of the Sun,' and the result of Lord Byron's conversation with Mr. Murray was, that the latter undertook to publish Hogg's works. The first letter from him to Murray was dated "Grieve and Scott's, Edinburgh, 26th December, 1814," though the post-mark shows it was not delivered until the 12th of January, 1815.

*Mr. Hogg to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

What the deuce have you made of my excellent poem that you are never publishing it, while I am starving for want of money, and cannot even afford a Christmas goose to my friends? I think I may say of you as the country-

man said to his friend, who asked him when his wife had her accouchement, "Troth, man," said he, "she's aye gaun about yet, and I think she'll be gaun to keep this ane till hirsle a thegither." However, I dare say that, like the said wife, you have your reasons for it ; but of all things a bookseller's reasons suit worst with a poet's board. I should be glad to know if you got safely across the Tweed and what number of the little family group you lost by the way betwixt Edinburgh and London, and how everything in the literary world is going on with you since that time . . . . Be sure to let me hear from you, and tell me how you are likely to come on with the copies of 'The Queen's Wake' which I sent you. It has been a losing business, and you must get me as much for it as you can. I hope you will soon find occasion for sending me an offer for a fifth edition. I am interrupted, so farewell for the present. God bless you !

JAMES HOGG.

A few days later Hogg again wrote a long letter, complaining that Blackwood's name was placed above Murray's in the advertisement of his book. This was followed by a third epistle.

*Mr. Hogg to John Murray.*

January 21st, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you a few days ago terribly chagrined about the advertisement. You have now explained it, and above all things in this world, I love a man who tells me the whole simple truth of his heart, as you have done, and I freely forgive you, for if I had thought the same way I would have acted the same way. But I cannot help smiling at your London Critics. They must read it over again. I had the best advice in the three kingdoms on the poem—men whose opinions, even given in a dream, I would not exchange for all the critics in England, before I ever proposed it for publication. I will risk my fame on it to all eternity. You may be mistaken, and you may be misled, my dear Murray, but as long as you tell me the simple truth as freely, you and I will be friends. Will

you soon need an edition of 'The Wake'? I think you should. Will our 'Repository' not go on? I have at least a volume of very superior poetry.

Yours very truly,

JAMES HOGG.

The 'Repository,' which Hogg refers to in his letter, was intended to be a miscellaneous collection, edited by himself, of pieces written by the principal popular poets of the day. He afterwards altered the proposed name to 'The Thistle and the Rose, or 'The Poetic Mirror,' and requested Byron and Scott to write for the 'Miscellany,' but they both eventually declined his proposition.

*Mr. Hogg to John Murray.*

March 15th, 1815.

"I want Lord Byron's promised assistance. If I had but thirty lines from him, I would be content; but I cannot consent to put the book to press without something from him. Though it would be a material loss to me to want his name engraved on 'The Thistle and Rose,' yet I would not for the world pester or dun him. Think seriously of these things, my dear friend; tell me, as usual, freely what you think; the conditions shall always be of your own making, for though I am somewhat needy I am not greedy.... The Duke of Buccleuch has been so kind as, all unsolicited, to give me a farm on Yarrow, rent free for life. I have that farm to stock, and a cottage to build this summer; so that you need not think it strange that I would like to raise a few pounds as soon as I can. However, do not let any casualty induce you to enter upon anything that appears contrary to your interest; for, as you shrewdly hinted formerly, whatever is against that will prove much more against mine finally. But let me hear from you soon...."

Another letter followed (31st March, 1815), requesting an answer—wishing to know what number of copies of 'The Queen's Wake' were on hand. At length, Murray answered:—

*John Murray to Mr. Hogg.*

London, April 10th, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I entreat you not to ascribe to inattention the delay which has occurred in my answer to your kind and interesting letter. Much more, I beg you not for a moment to entertain a doubt about the interest which I take in your writings, or the exertions which I shall ever make to promote their sale and popularity. . . . They are selling every day, and I have no doubt that they will both be out of print in two months. It is really no less absurd than malicious to suppose that I do not advertise, and by every other means strive to sell these works in which I am so much interested. Respecting the collection of poems, I really think Lord Byron may, in a little time, be relied upon as a contributor. He continues to be exceedingly friendly to you in all respects, and it will be reciprocity of kindness in you to make large allowance for such a man. Newly married—consider the entire alteration which it has occasioned in his habits and occupations, or the flood of distracting engagements and duties of all kinds which have attended this change.

He has just come to town, and is in every respect very greatly improved. I wish you had been with me on Friday last when I had the honour of presenting Scott to him for the first time. This I consider as a commemorative event in literary history, and I sincerely regret that you were not present. I wish you had dashed up to London at once, and if you will do so immediately I will undertake to board you if you will get a bed, which can easily be obtained in my neighbourhood.

Could you not write a poetical epistle, a lively one, to Lady Byron—she is a good mathematician, writes poetry, understands French, Italian, Latin and Greek—and tell her that as she has prevented Lord B. from fulfilling his promise to you, she is bound to insist upon its execution, and to add a poem of her own to it by way of interest.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have forgotten to tell you that Gifford tells me that he would receive, with every disposition to favour it, any critique which you like to send of new Scottish works. If I had been aware of it in time I certainly would have

invited your remarks on 'Mannering.' Our article is not good and our praise is by no means adequate, I allow, but I suspect you very greatly overrate the novel. "Meg Merrilies" is worthy of Shakspeare, but all the rest of the novel might have been written by Scott's brother or any other body. Adieu for the present: pray write to me immediately to tell me that you forgive my silence, and believe me, dear Sir,

Your faithful friend,  
JOHN MURRAY.

Hogg's reply was as follows:—

*Mr. Hogg to John Murray.*

April 17th, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

On reading your kind and enthusiastic letter, I determined to come to London and join the illustrious bards, but to my great grief I find I cannot accomplish it. I enter to my farm at May-day, which is fast approaching, and at that time I *must* be in Yarrow; and besides I have not money to spare. I am, however, much vexed and disappointed because I cannot accept your warm invitation; and I am only comforted by the hope that by-and-by I may be enabled to appear among you to more advantage than I could have done at present. I am obliged to you for your fair statement of the *sale*. Such a thing lets one see precisely what they may expect, and when to expect it. I never had the slightest apprehension that you were dilatory or careless about pushing the works, and I do not know how I came to mention it . . .

If Southey's 'Roderick' is not bespoke, I should be very happy to review it, but I must warn you that I am very partial to that bard's productions. It would be a most interesting thing to have a small piece of Lady Byron's in 'The Thistle and Rose,' and the thing which you propose for me to do is a good subject both for humour and compliment. But there is nothing I am so afraid of as teasing or pestering my superiors for favours. Lord B. knows well enough that without his support at first, the thing will not go on, and as I am sure he is a kind soul, I think I will for the present trust to himself.

Most truly,  
JAMES HOGG.

Murray sent the Shepherd some "timeous" help, to which Hogg replied—still from Edinburgh—by asking a novel favour; no less than that Mr. and Mrs. Murray should look out for a wife for him!

*Mr. Hogg to John Murray.*

May 7th, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

I thank you with all my heart for the little timeous supply you have lent me at present. I did intend shortly to have asked from you what little you could spare from the copies of 'The Wake' sold, but I had no thought that the final payment of 'The Pilgrims' would have been made to me sooner than November. You are the prince of booksellers, if people would but leave you to your own judgment and natural generous disposition.

I leave Edinburgh on Thursday for my little farm on Yarrow. I will have a confused summer, for I have as yet no home that I can dwell in; but I hope by-and-by to have some fine fun there with you, fishing in Saint Mary's Loch and the Yarrow, eating bull-trout, singing songs, and drinking whisky. This little possession is what I stood much in need of—a habitation among my native hills was what of all the world I desired; and if I had a little more money at command, I would just be as happy a man as I know of; but that is an article of which I am ever in want. I wish you or Mrs. Murray would speer me out a good wife with a few thousands. I dare say there is many a romantic girl about London who would think it a fine ploy to become a Yarrow Shepherdess!

Believe me, dear Murray,

Very sincerely yours,

JAMES HOGG.

Here, for the present, we come to an end of the Shepherd's letters; but we shall find him turning up again, and Mr. Murray still continuing his devoted friend and adviser.

## CHAPTER XV.

LORD BYRON'S DEALINGS WITH MR. MURRAY—*continued.*

ON January 2nd, 1815, Lord Byron was married to Miss Milbanke, and during the honeymoon, while he was residing at Seaham, the residence of his father-in-law Sir Ralph Milbanke, he wrote to Murray desiring him to make occasional enquiry at his chambers in the Albany to see if they were kept in proper order.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

February 17th, 1815.

MY LORD,

I have paid frequent attention to your wish that I should ascertain if all things appeared to be safe in your chambers, and I am happy in being able to report that the whole establishment carries an appearance of security, which is confirmed by the unceasing vigilance of your faithful and frigid Duenna [Mrs. Mule].

Every day I have been in expectation of receiving a copy of 'Guy Mannering,' of which the reports of a friend of mine, who has read the first two volumes, is such as to create the most extravagant expectations of an extraordinary combination of wit, humour and pathos. I am certain of one of the first copies, and this you may rely upon receiving with the utmost expedition.

I hear many interesting letters read to me from the Continent, and one in particular from Mr. Fazakerly, describing his interview of four hours with Bonaparte, was particularly good. He acknowledged at once to the poisoning of the sick prisoners in Egypt; they had the plague, and would have communicated it to the rest of his army if





LORD AND LADY BYRON.

*(From an original sketch by LADY CAROLINE LAMB.)*



he had carried them on with him, and he had only to determine if he should leave them to a cruel death by the Turks, or to an easy one by poison. When asked his motive for becoming a Mahomedan, he replied that there were great political reasons for this, and gave several ; but he added, the Turks would not admit me at first unless I submitted to two indispensable ceremonies. . . . They agreed at length to remit the first and to commute the other for a solemn vow, for every offence to give expiation by the performance of some good action. "Oh, gentlemen," says he, "for good actions, you know you may command me," and his first good action was to put to instant death an hundred of their priests, whom he suspected of intrigues against him. Not aware of his summary justice, they sent a deputation to beg the lives of these people on the score of his engagement. He answered that nothing would have made him so happy as this opportunity of showing his zeal for their religion ; but that they had arrived too late ; their friends had been dead nearly an hour.

He asked Lord Ebrington of which party he was, in Politics. "The Opposition." "The Opposition? Then can your Lordship tell me the reason why the Opposition are so unpopular in England?" With something like presence of mind on so delicate a question, Lord Ebrington instantly replied : "Because, sir, we always insisted upon it, that you would be successful in Spain."

Walter Scott sent you a copy of the 'Lord of the Isles ;' but as it arrived at least a month after I had forwarded a 'Mail Coach' copy to you, I took that copy in exchange (there were no writings in it), and thus balanced my account. There are not two opinions about it being his worst poem.

I am delaying the publication of our edition in four volumes only until you find a leisure moment to strike off the dedication to your friend Mr. Hobhouse, who still thinks that it is not precisely the same thing to have music made to one's poems, and to write poetry for music ; and I advise you most conscientiously to abide by the determination of Mr. Hobhouse's good sense.

Mrs. Wilmot's tragedy is to be brought forward at Drury Lane immediately after Easter.

I have the honour to remain, my Lord,  
Your faithful Servant,  
JOHN MURRAY.

During the spring and summer of 1815 Byron was a frequent visitor at Albemarle Street, and in April, as has been already recorded, he first met Walter Scott in Murray's drawing room.

In March, Lord and Lady Byron took up their residence at 13, Piccadilly Terrace. The following letter is undated, but was probably written in the autumn of 1815.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

MY LORD,

The enclosed note will explain the contents of the accompanying volume in sheets: which if returned to me, I will put into such dress as your taste shall direct. I picked up, the other day, some of Napoleon's own writing paper, all the remainder of which has been burnt; it has his portrait and eagle, as you will perceive by holding a sheet to the light either of sun or candle: so I thought I would take a little for you, hoping that you will just write me a poem upon any twenty-four quires of it in return. I beg the favour of you to offer my thanks to Lady Byron for some game which came opportunely to fatten Southey, Sotheby, and Malcolm, with sundry other Poeticals and Historicals, who dined with me on Thursday. I am really more grieved than I can venture to say, that I so rarely have an opportunity of seeing you; but I trust that you are well.

With compliments, I remain, my Lord,

Your faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

By the autumn of 1815 Lord Byron found himself involved in pecuniary embarrassments, which had, indeed, existed before his marriage, but were now considerably increased and demanded immediate settlement. His first thought was to part with his books, though they did not form a very valuable collection. He mentioned the matter to a book collector, who conferred with other dealers on

the subject. The circumstances coming to the ears of Mr. Murray, he at once communicated with Lord Byron, and forwarded him a cheque for £1500, with the assurance that an equal sum should be at his service in the course of a few weeks, offering, at the same time, to dispose of all the copyrights of his poems for his Lordship's use.

Lord Byron could not fail to be affected by this generous offer, and whilst returning the cheque, he wrote :—

November 14th, 1815.

“Your present offer is a favour which I would accept from you, if I accepted such from any man . . . The circumstances which induce me to part with my books, though sufficiently, are not *immediately*, pressing. I have made up my mind to this, and there's an end. Had I been disposed to trespass upon your kindness in this way, it would have been before now; but I am not sorry to have an opportunity of declining it, as it sets my opinion of you, and indeed of human nature, in a different light from that in which I have been accustomed to consider it.”

Meanwhile Lord Byron had completed his ‘Siege of Corinth’ and ‘Parisina,’ and sent the packet containing them to Mr. Murray. They had been copied in the legible hand of Lady Byron. On receiving the poems Mr. Murray wrote to Lord Byron as follows :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

December, 1815.

MY LORD,

I tore open the packet you sent me, and have found in it a Pearl. It is very interesting, pathetic, beautiful—do you know, I would almost say moral. I am really writing to you before the billows of the passions you excited have subsided. I have been most agreeably disappointed (a word I cannot associate with the poem) at the story, which—what you hinted to me and wrote—had alarmed me; and I should not have read it aloud to my wife if my eye

had not traced the delicate hand that transcribed it. This poem is all action and interest: not a line but what is necessary. Now, I do think that you should *fragmentize* the first hundred, and condense the last thirty, of 'Corinth,' and then you have, in words of the highest compliment, two poems (as Mr. H. said) as good as any you have written. I admire the fabrication of the "big Tear,"\* which is very fine—much larger, by the way, than Shakespeare's. I do think you thought of *Ney* in casting off his bandage. The close is exquisite: and you know that all's well that ends well—with which I stop. I will answer for Mr. Gifford: and, to conclude (a bargain), say that they are mine for the enclosed, and add to the obligations of,

My Lord, your faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Mr. Murray enclosed to Lord Byron two notes, amounting to a thousand guineas, for the copyright of the poems, but Lord Byron refused the notes, declaring that the sum was too great.

"Your offer," he answered (Jan. 3rd, 1816) "is *liberal* in the extreme, and much more than the poems can possibly be worth; but I cannot accept it, and will not. You are most welcome to them as additions to the collected volumes, without any demand or expectation on my part whatever. . . . I am very glad that the handwriting was a favourable omen of the *morale* of the piece; but you must not trust to that, as my copyist would write out anything I desired in all the ignorance of innocence—I hope, however, in this instance, with no great peril to either. . . . I have enclosed your draft *torn*, for fear of accident by the way—I wish you would not throw temptation in mine. It is not from a disdain of the universal idol, nor from a present superfluity of his treasures, I can assure you, that I refuse to worship him; but what is right is right, and must not yield to circumstances."

The money, therefore, which Murray thought the copyright of the 'Siege of Corinth' and 'Parisina' was worth,

\* 'Parisina,' Stanza xiv.

remained untouched in the publisher's hands. It was afterwards suggested, by Mr. Rogers and Sir James Mackintosh, to Lord Byron, that a portion of it (£600) might be applied to the relief of Mr. Godwin, the author of 'An Enquiry into Political Justice,' who was then in difficulties; and Lord Byron himself proposed that the remainder should be divided between Mr. Maturin and Mr. Coleridge. This proposal caused the deepest vexation to Mr. Murray, who made the following remonstrance against such a proceeding.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

Albemarle Street, Monday, 4 o'clock.

MY LORD.

I did not like to detain you this morning, but I confess to you that I came away impressed with a belief that you had already reconsidered this matter, as it refers to me. Your Lordship will pardon me if I cannot avoid looking upon it as a species of cruelty, after what has passed, to take from me so large a sum—offered with no reference to the marketable value of the poems, but out of personal friendship and gratitude alone,—to cast it away on the wanton and ungenerous interference of those who cannot enter into your Lordship's feelings for me, upon persons who have so little claim upon you, and whom those who so interested themselves might more decently and honestly enrich from their own funds, than by endeavouring to be liberal at the cost of another, and by forcibly resuming from me a sum which you had generously and nobly resigned.

I am sure you will do me the justice to believe that I would strain every nerve in your service, but it is actually heartbreaking to throw away my earnings on others. I am no rich man, abounding, like Mr. Rogers, in superfluous thousands, but working hard for independence, and what would be the most grateful pleasure to me if likely to be useful to you personally, becomes merely painful if it causes me to work for others for whom I can have no such feelings.

This is a most painful subject for me to address you

upon, and I am ill able to express my feelings about it. I commit them entirely to your liberal construction with a reference to your knowledge of my character.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

JOHN MURRAY.

This letter was submitted to Gifford before it was despatched, and he wrote :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

I have made a scratch or two, and the letter now expresses my genuine sentiments on the matter. But should you not see Rogers?

It is evident that Lord Byron is a little awkward about this matter, and his officious friends have got him into a most *unlordly* scrape, from which they can only relieve him by treading back their steps. The more I consider their conduct, the more I am astonished at their impudence. A downright robbery is honourable to it. If you see Rogers, do not be shy to speak: he trembles at report, and here is an evil one for him.

Faithfully yours,

WM. GIFFORD.

In the end Lord Byron was compelled by the increasing pressure of his debts to accept the sum offered by Murray and use it for his own purposes.

To revert to the poems themselves: Lord Byron, in sending the MSS. of the ‘Siege of Corinth’ and ‘Parisina’ to Murray, requested him to consult Gifford, and authorized the latter to strike out or alter any of the lines at his pleasure. The following is Murray’s letter to Lord Byron, after Gifford had read over the poem :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

“I assure you my conscience has not been without its compunctions, at not calling or writing, although incessant



business and interruptions have prevented both. Mr. Gifford has read, with great delight, the 'Siege of Corinth,' in which—from the apparition, which is exquisitely conceived and supported, to the end—he says, you have equalled your best: the battle in the streets, and the catastrophe, all worthy of their author. He makes three critical remarks: that we are rather too long in coming to the interesting part; the scene immediately before the apparition is rather too frightful; and there are perhaps too many minutiae after the catastrophe—all very easy of improvement if you feel their force, which certainly I do: and, then, it is as beautiful a little poem as ever was written. You would have received a proof before this had I not been anxious to preserve the MSS.; but a portion will be sent this night, and the rest on Monday.

Coleridge is wild and fanciful, and will make much talk. I will gladly make a bidding when I can have the remainder,\* as well to judge of quantity as quality. I am very anxious to receive Mr. Hunt's poem ['Rimini'], of which your opinion is perfectly satisfactory. I should have put up for you the sheets of Sir John Malcolm's 'Persia,' which will not be published till December, but I am anxious that you should have the first reading of it, and I will give you a better copy hereafter, with twenty plates. Mr. Ward was with me yesterday, and inquired most warmly about you. We are filling now: if you are out about four, will you look in and see us. Pardon my haste.

"J. M."

The following is Mr. Gifford's note about the 'Siege of Corinth':—

"It is a dreadful picture: Caravaggio outdone in his own way. I have hinted at the removal of one couplet: if its sense be wanted, it may be compressed into one of the other lines. Its powers are unquestionable; but can any human being deserve such a delineation? I keep my old opinion of Lord Byron. He may be what he will. Why will he not *will* to be the first of poets and of men. I

\* This may have related to 'Christabel'—a poem greatly admired by Byron, but never finished.

lament bitterly to see a great mind run to seed, and waste itself in rank growth.

"Ever yours,

"W. G."

Mr. D'Israeli was greatly affected by the 'Siege of Corinth'; shortly after its perusal, he wrote to Mr. Murray.

*Mr. I. D'Israeli to John Murray.*

December, 1815.

DEAR M.,

I am anxious to tell you, that I find myself, this morning, so strangely affected by the perusal of the poem last night, that I feel that it is one which stands quite by itself. I know of nothing of the kind which is worthy of comparison with it. There is no scene, no incident, nothing so marvellous in pathos and terror in Homer, or any bard of antiquity. It impresses one with such a complete feeling of utter desolation, mental and scenical, that when Minotti touched that last spark which scattered its little world into air, he did not make it more desolate than the terrible and affecting energy of the poet's imagination. But Homer had not such a sort of spirit as the mistress of Alp—he had wolves, and vultures, and dogs; but Homer has never conveyed his reader into a vast Golgotha, nor harrowed us with the vulture flapping the back of the gorged wolf, nor the dogs: the terror, the truth, and the loneliness of that spot will never be erased from my memory. Alp by the side of the besieged wall; that ghost-like manner of giving him a minute's reflection by showing one of the phenomena of nature—that is a stroke of a spirit's character never before imagined, and can never be surpassed. And after the most sublime incident that ever poet invented, still to have the power to agitate the mind, by that eagle who flies nearer the sun, mistaking the cloud of destruction for night; in a word, I could not abstain from assuring you, that I never read any poem that exceeded in power this, to me, most extraordinary production. I do not know where I am to find any which can excite the same degree of emotion.

Yours always,

I. D'I.

The following correspondence relates to 'Parisina':—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

MY LORD,

Though I have not written to you, you have occupied my thoughts. Gifford declares to me that you never surpassed 'Parisina.' I enclose Ward's note after reading the 'Siege of Corinth.' I lent him 'Parisina' also, and he called yesterday to express his mind at your hesitation about their merits. He was particularly struck with the "Son's reply to Azo." I lent Parisina to Mr. Hay (Mr. Wilmot's friend) last night, and I enclose his note. I send the proof. If you are *sure* that you can improve it, do; otherwise, touch it not. I will send a revise of 'Corinth' to-night or to-morrow. Gifford thinks, if the narrative were put into the mouth of the Turk (if it didn't choke him), would give it additional interest. I hope your Lordship is well.

J. M.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

Albemarle Street, January 4th, 1816.

MY LORD,

I send the manuscript, of which Gifford says: "I read the manuscript, and with great pleasure. It is indeed very good, and the plan is ingenious. The poetry is in the best manner." Nothing can be more ingeniously framed and more interestingly told than this story. I liked it ten times better on the third reading than on the first. I read it last night to D'Israeli and his family, and they were perfectly overcome by it. The gradual madness of Parisina, the preparation and death of Hugo, and the subsequent description of Azo, by which, after all the story is over, you recreate a new and most tender interest, are all most attractive and touching, and in your best manner. In these matters I always liken myself to Molière's "old woman"; and when I am pleased I know our readers will be pleased. Where you can strengthen expressions or lines, I entreat you to do so, but otherwise nothing can be added or retrenched for its improvement, though it is a gem truly worth polishing. These two tales form an invaluable contrast, and display the variety of

your power. For myself, I am really more interested by the effect of the story of 'Parisina' than by either, I think, of the former tales. I will call upon you from two to three. Depend upon it you beat them all; you have allowed plenty of time for any to take the field and equal your last 'Lara,' which I find, from the opinion of Rose and Ellis, is thought by poets to be your *best poem*. I really am convinced that there is not any volume, the production of one man, to be picked out that will be so interesting and universally popular as that which your six tales would make. Formed upon human passions, they can never pass away.

JOHN MURRAY.

It is not necessary here to touch upon the circumstances of Lord Byron's separation from his wife; suffice it to say that early in 1816 he determined to leave England, and resolved, as he had before contemplated doing, to sell off his books and furniture. He committed the arrangements to Mr. Murray, through Mr. Hanson, his solicitor, in Bloomsbury Square. A few months before, when Lord Byron was in straits for money, Mr. Hanson communicated with Mr. Murray as follows:—

*Mr. Hanson to John Murray.*

November 23rd, 1815.

Mr. Hanson's compliments to Mr. Murray. He has seen Lord Byron, and his Lordship has no objection to his Library being taken at a valuation. Mr. Hanson submits to Mr. Murray whether it would not be best to name one respectable bookseller to set a value on them. In the meantime, Mr. Hanson has written to Messrs. Crook and Armstrong, in whose hands the books now are, not to proceed further in the sale.

On the 28th of December, 1815, Mr. Murray received the following valuation:—

"Mr. Cochrane presents respectful compliments to Mr. Murray, and begs to inform him that upon carefully

inspecting the books in Skinner Street, he judges the fair value of them to be £450."

Mr. Murray sent Lord Byron a bill of £500 for the books as a temporary accommodation. But the books were traced and attached by the sheriff. On the 6th of March, 1816, Lord Byron wrote to Murray:—

"I send to you to-day for this reason: the books you purchased are again seized, and, as matters stand, had much better be sold at once by public auction. I wish to see you to-morrow to return your bill for them, which, thank Heaven, is neither due nor paid. *That* part, so far as *you* are concerned, being settled (which it can be, and shall be, when I see you to-morrow), I have no further delicacy about the matter. This is about the tenth execution in as many months; so I am pretty well hardened; but it is fit I should pay the forfeit of my forefathers' extravagance as well as my own; and whatever my faults may be, I suppose they will be pretty well expiated in time—or eternity."

A letter was next received by Mr. Murray's solicitor, Mr. Turner, from Mr. Gunn, to the following effect:—

*Mr. Gunn to Mr. Turner.*

March 16th, 1816.

SIR,

Mr. Constable, the plaintiff's attorney, has written to say he will indemnify the sheriff to sell the books under the execution; as such, we must decline taking your indemnity.

The result was, that Lord Byron, on the 22nd of March, paid to Crook and Armstrong £231 15s., "being the amount of three levies, poundage, and expenses," and also £25 13s. 6d., the amount of Crook and Armstrong's account. Crook and Armstrong settled with Levy, the Jew, who had lent Byron money; and also with the officer, who had been in possession twenty-three days, at 5s. a day. The books were afterwards sold by Mr. Evans at his house,

26, Pall Mall, on the 5th of April, 1816, and the following day. The catalogue describes them as "A collection of books, late the property of a nobleman, about to leave England on a tour."

Mr. Murray was present at the sale, and bought a selection of books for Mrs. Leigh, for Mr. Rogers, and for Mr. J. C. Hobhouse, as well as for himself. He bought the large screen, with the portraits of actors and pugilists, which is still at Albemarle Street. There was also a silver cup and cover, nearly thirty ounces in weight, elegantly chased. These articles realised £723 12s. 6d., and after charging the costs, commission, and Excise duty, against the sale of the books, the balance was handed over to Lord Byron.

The 'Sketch from Private Life' was one of the most bitter and satirical things Byron had ever written. In sending it to Mr. Murray (March 30th, 1816), he wrote: "I send you my last night's dream, and request to have fifty copies struck off for private distribution. I wish Mr. Gifford to look at it; it is from life." Afterwards, when Lord Byron called upon Mr. Murray, he said: "I could not get to sleep last night, but lay rolling and tossing about until this morning, when I got up and wrote that; and it is very odd, Murray, after doing that, I went to bed again, and never slept sounder in my life."

Mr. Murray showed the verses to Rogers, Frere, and Stratford Canning. In communicating the result to Byron, he said:—

"They have all seen and admired the lines; they agree that you have produced nothing better; that satire is your forte; and so in each class as you choose to adopt it. Mr. F. suggests that in the last line *weltering* does not accord with *hang on high*, which precedes it. I have sent a copy to Mr. Gifford."

Lord Byron answered :—

"I doubt about *weltering*. We say 'weltering in blood,' but do they not also say 'weltering in the wind,' 'weltering on a gibbet'? I have no dictionary; so look. In the meantime, I have put 'festering,' which, perhaps, in any case is the best word of the two. Shakespeare has it often, and I do not think it is too strong for the figure in this thing. Quick! quick! quick! quick!"

The lines were printed and sent to Lord Byron. But before publishing them, Mr. Murray took advice of his special literary adviser and solicitor, Mr. Sharon Turner. His reply was as follows :—

*Mr. Turner to John Murray.*

April 3rd, 1816.

There are some expressions in the Poem that I think are libellous, and the severe tenor of the whole would induce a jury to find them to be so. The question only remains, to whom it is applicable. It certainly does not itself name the person. But the legal pleadings charge that innuendo must mean such a person. How far evidence extrinsic to the work might be brought or received to show that the author meant a particular person, I will not pretend to affirm. Some cases have gone so far on this point that I should not think it safe to risk. And if a libel, it is a libel not only by the author, but by the printer, the publisher, and every circulator.

I am, dear Murray, yours most faithfully,

SHN. TURNER.

Mr. Murray did not publish the poems, but after their appearance in the newspapers, they were announced by many booksellers as "Poems by Lord Byron on his Domestic Circumstances." Among others, Constable printed and published them, whereupon Blackwood, as Murray's agent in Edinburgh, wrote to him, requesting the suppression of the verses, and threatening proceedings.

Constable, in reply, said he had no wish to invade literary property, but the verses had come to him without either author's name, publisher's name, or printer's name, and that there was no literary property in publications to which neither author's, publisher's, nor printer's name was attached. Blackwood could proceed no farther. In his letter to Murray (April 17th, 1816), he wrote :—

“I have distributed copies of ‘Fare Thee Well’ and ‘A Sketch’ to Dr. Thomas Brown, Walter Scott, and Professor Playfair. One cannot read ‘Fare Thee Well’ without crying. The other is ‘vigorous hate,’ as you say. Its power is really terrible; one’s blood absolutely creeps while reading it.”

Byron left England in April, 1816 and during his travels he corresponded frequently with Mr. Murray, partly by means of the letters which are familiar to every reader of Moore’s ‘Life,’ partly by the hand of his secretary, Dr. Polidori :—

*Dr. Polidori to John Murray.*

July 10th, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter to me was received both by myself and Lord Byron with great pleasure. Yours of the day following has not arrived, which is a pity, as in your last you talk of a journal in it which, to Lord Byron—who hears nothing but reports of Insurrection in the East, Rebellions in the West, and Murders North and South—would be a great gratification. Lord Liverpool resigned, Lord Wellington blown up, and half-a-dozen greatly lettered names—with some pleasant accidents after them—is all we have to keep us newspaperly alive. We are also quite ignorant of all literary news; something of some poems by Coleridge, Maturin’s play, ‘The Antiquary,’ and ‘Glenarvon’ have reached us. Since it has given you hopes of entering well into the literary world next winter, that ‘Childe Harold’ has got another canto of 118 stanzas, you will be more pleased to hear of another poem of 400 lines called ‘The



Castle of Chillon'; the feelings of a third of three brothers in prison on the banks of the Geneva Lake. I think it very beautiful, containing more of his tender than of his sombre poetry. Indeed 'Childe Harold' himself is a little altered—more philosophic and less blackly misanthropic than before. . . . Lord Byron desires me to say that it was my neglectful hurry on writing my last that hindered me repeating to you his compliments, which he now sends you, thrice repeated.

The MSS. of the third canto of 'Childe Harold' and 'The Prisoner of Chillon' duly reached the publisher. Mr. Murray acknowledged the MSS.:—

*Mr. Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 12th, 1816.

MY LORD,

I have rarely addressed you with more pleasure than upon the present occasion. I was thrilled with delight yesterday by the announcement of Mr. Shelley with the MS. of 'Childe Harold.' I had no sooner got the quiet possession of it than, trembling with auspicious hope about it, I carried it direct to Mr. Gifford. He has been exceedingly ill with jaundice, and unable to write or do anything. He was much pleased by my attention. I called upon him to-day. He said he was unable to leave off last night, and that he had sat up until he had finished every line of the canto. It had actually agitated him into a fever, and he was much worse when I called. He had persisted this morning in finishing the volume, and he pronounced himself infinitely more delighted than when he first wrote to me. He says that what you have heretofore published is nothing to this effort. He says also, besides its being the most original and interesting, it is the most finished of your writings; and he has undertaken to correct the press for you.

Never, since my intimacy with Mr. Gifford, did I see him so heartily pleased, or give one-fiftieth part of the praise, with one-thousandth part of the warmth. He speaks in ecstasy of the Dream—the whole volume beams with genius. I am sure he loves you in his heart; and when he called upon me some time ago, and I told

him that you were gone, he instantly exclaimed in a full room, "Well! he has not left his equal behind him—that I will say!" Perhaps you will enclose a line for him. . . .

Respecting the 'Monody,' I extract from a letter which I received this morning from Sir James Mackintosh: "I presume that I have to thank you for a copy of the 'Monody' on Sheridan received this morning. I wish it had been accompanied by the additional favour of mentioning the name of the writer, at which I only guess: it is difficult to read the poem without desiring to know."

Generally speaking it is not, I think, popular, and spoken of rather for fine passages than as a whole. How could you give so trite an image as in the last two lines? Gifford does not like it; Frere does. *A-propos* of Mr. Frere: he came to me while at breakfast this morning, and between some stanzas which he was repeating to me of a truly original poem of his own, he said carelessly, "By the way, about *half-an-hour ago* I was so silly (taking an immense pinch of snuff and priming his nostrils with it) as to get *married!*" Perfectly true. He set out for Hastings about an hour after he left me, and upon my conscience I verily believe that, if I had had your MS. to have put into his hands, as sure as fate he would have sat with me reading it\* all the morning and totally forgotten his little engagement.

I saw Lord Holland to-day looking very well. I wish I could send you Gifford's 'Ben Jonson'; it is full of fun and interest, and allowed on all hands to be most ably done; would, I am sure, amuse you. I have very many new important and interesting works of all kinds in the press, which I should be happy to know any means of sending. My *Review* is improving in sale beyond my most sanguine expectations. I now sell nearly 9000. Even Perry says the *Edinburgh Review* is going to the devil. I was with Mrs. Leigh to-day, who is very well; she leaves town on Saturday. Her eldest daughter, I fancy, is a most engaging girl; but yours, my Lord, is unspeakably interesting and promising, and I am happy to add that Lady B. is looking well. God bless you! my best wishes and feelings are always with you, and I sincerely wish that

\* He had left his wife at the church so as to bring his poem to Murray.

your happiness may be as unbounded as your genius,  
which has rendered me so much,

My Lord, your obliged Servant,

J. M.

The negotiations for the purchase of the third canto were left in the hands of Mr. Kinnaird, who demurred to Mr. Murray's first offer of 1500 guineas, whereupon the publisher wrote to Lord Byron.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 20th. 1816.

MY LORD,

As soon as I had read the third canto of 'Childe Harold' myself, I had no hesitation in telling Mr. Kinnaird that I should make my offer fifteen hundred guineas; but he has called to-day to say that two thousand are expected by your friends. I told him that hitherto, I believed that no one had impugned my estimations; and that with regard to yourself I had no other feeling than a desire to give all that was possible, and on the present occasion I thought I had anticipated any notions, and that I suspected the demand to be based rather on my own data than on any independent estimate. The poem, however, is so much beyond anything in modern days that I may be out in my calculation: it requires an ethereal mind, like its author's, to cope with it. He was so obliging as to ask for the additional £500 eventually; but I have preferred to settle it at once at the £2000—and now the Lord (not you) have mercy upon me! Remember I do stipulate for all the original MSS., copies or scraps.

I am thinking more seriously than ever of publishing a monthly literary journal and am promised the contributions of the greatest characters here. If I succeed, I will venture to solicit the favour of your powerful assistance in the shape of letters, essays, characters, facts, travels, epigrams, and other—to you—small shot, and to entreat the favour of your influence among your friends.

I remain, my Lord, your faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

In his reply Lord Byron consented to receive the extra £500 conditionally on the sale of a certain number of copies to be fixed by the publisher.

After the departure of Lord Byron from England Mr. Murray had much correspondence respecting him, more particularly with the Hon. Augusta Leigh, his sister; Lady Byron, and Lady Caroline Lamb.

*Mrs. Leigh to John Murray.*

Six Mile Bottom, Newmarket.

Pray have the goodness to give me a line, when you can spare one moment, to say whether you or anybody else of your acquaintance has heard from my brother since I saw you, because I have not, and his silence of five weeks being unusual, I am somewhat anxious. I shall be much obliged to you for a book which I see advertised, the 'Journal of the Duchesse d'Angoulême.' It sounds interesting, and Col. Leigh has a great wish to read it, or I could wait until I return to town. If you can tell me any remarks upon the *Reviews*, you know they can't fail to be interesting.

Yours very sincerely,

AUGUSTA LEIGH.

P.S.—The post has brought me a letter from Byron—quite well; also one from Mr. Davies; so I need not trouble you with those queries. My brother writes to me about some trouble with one of his servants, Fletcher, and I believe it a matter of great difficulty.

December, 1816.

I return you the letter, which I have shown this morning to Mr. D[avies], who is going to town to-morrow, and will call upon you and talk over the subject. *He* seems to treat it as *you* do, and as I am much inclined to do, except when I think about what I've heard is *said* or *thought*, and really for my brother's sake, as well as my own and that of all belonging to me, it afflicts me; at the same time that I know not how to act. I trust to you and Mr. D. to discuss the point, and if any new thought should strike

me, I will write to you again. Of course I suppose the 5000 printed must be circulated, and if the lines were omitted in the others, it might be asked—*Why?* \* I am in a terrible state of unhappiness, which I'm sure will not surprise you. Anxious to do the best by *all*, and I assure you *you* are included, for I am truly grateful for your kind considerateness, and

Ever very truly yours,

A. L.

P.S.—I must tell you that the remark made to my friend was from one who is a most enthusiastic admirer of my brother. I should less have minded it from one in any degree prepossessed against him. Pray tell Mr. D. this; I omitted it.

Mr. Murray wrote to Lord Byron on the 13th of December, 1816, informing him that, at a dinner at the Albion Tavern, he had sold to the assembled booksellers 7000 of his third canto of 'Childe Harold' and 7000 of his 'Prisoner of Chillon.' He then proceeds:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

In literary affairs I have taken the field in great force—opening with the 'Third Canto, 'Chillon,' and, following up my blow, I have since published 'Tales of my Landlord,' another novel, I believe (but I really don't know) by the author of 'Waverley'; but much superior to what has already appeared, excepting the character of Meg Merrilies. Every one is in ecstasy about it, and I would give a finger if I could send it you, but this I will contrive. Conversations with your friend Buonaparte at St. Helena, amusing, but scarce worth sending. Lord Holland has just put forth a very improved edition of the 'Life of Lope de Vega and Inez de Castro.' Gifford's 'Ben Jonson' has put to death all former editions, and is very much liked. The 'Faro-Table' of Tobin has

\* This must have related to the third canto of 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' in which many stanzas were inserted which Mrs. Leigh thought might give pain to Lady Byron.

been acted and successfully, but it is very paltry—principally made up from the ‘School for Scandal.’ Mr. Leigh’s (M.P.) account of his Travels contains a very remarkable and well-told incident, which would amuse you. We have letters coming out from Hume, Chesterfield, and Franklin. Moore’s poem is to be in the press in February, so the author tells me. I have a poem, or rather one is coming to me by an obscure author in Paris, which I am assured contains some very powerful passages; this Mr. Gifford allows. Mr. K[innaird] has been ejected from Drury Lane, to his no small annoyance; this comes of quarrelling with a woman!

January 22nd, 1817.

I am continually harassed by shoals of MSS. poems—two, three, or four a day. I require a porter to carry, an author to read, and a secretary to answer them. Maturin has written two acts of a new tragedy, which I think they are spoiling by sending him criticisms. Sheil, another Irishman, the author of ‘Adelaide,’ exceedingly applauded in Dublin, but hastily damned in London, tells me that another work is in hand, which is to be produced at Covent Garden in a month, called the ‘Apostate.’ I am just about to publish a strange political rhapsody by Lord Erskine, entitled ‘Armata,’ describing our constitution under a foreign name. “Damn them,” says the author, “I’ll show the world that I am not in my dotage yet.” “What the devil’s this?” said Frere, on taking up some sheets of the said work. “Oh,” said Gifford, “something that Murray is publishing.” “Not upon his own account,” replied Frere. By the way, Frere, who always remembers you with honour (and I told you before what he wrote about the third canto), likes the ‘Armenian Grammar’\* very much, though he would prefer the English part of it. He wishes me to send you Mitford on the ‘Harmony of Language,’ which I will do. He says that the type is not so large as it ought to be for a language which is not to be whipped into one, but coaxed in by the most enticing appearances. I will most willingly take fifty copies even upon my love of letters; so they may be sent as soon as completed. We are all much interested with

\* Byron, to please his neighbours at Venice, the Armenian monks of San Lazaro, edited a grammar printed by them at their own press.

"the very curious books and MSS. chiefly translated from Greek originals now lost," and I am desired to entreat that you will gain every particular respecting their history and contents, together with the best account of the Armenian language, which may form a very interesting introduction to the copies which you send here, and which preface I will print myself; unless as a curiosity you print it there also; or if you would review the 'Grammar' for me and insert all this knowledge in the article, which would certainly be the very best way of making the 'Grammar' known to the public. I wish, besides obliging me with such a curious and interesting critique, that you would, unknown even to your bosom friend Hobhouse (to whom I beg to repeat my kindest remembrances), attempt some work in prose, which I will engage to keep sacredly secret and publish anonymously. I beg you to be assured that I am perfectly ready to undergo the copyright of as many cantos of 'Childe Harold,' or any other poem, as fast as they are completed to your own entire satisfaction; but remember we have got to heap Pelion on Ossa; the higher the pile already, the far greater our future labour. I forgot to mention above that I have as yet ascertained only that there are no Armenian types at Cambridge. In my next I will know with regard to this matter at Oxford. If you can pick up at Venice a quarto entitled 'L'Istoria di Verona del Sig. Girolamo,' Verona, 1594, you will find at page 589 the story of the Montagues and Capulets given historically, and related with great beauty and interest. Pray keep an exact Journal of all you see, and write me faithful accounts of sights, curiosities, shows, and manners, etc. I will use nothing without your positive permission. We had a quizzing article on Wedderburn Webster,\* who has replied through the *Morning Chronicle* in a letter to Mr. Gifford, which he concluded by leaving him with "*feelings of contempt and oblivion.*" I am sorry that Mr. Hobhouse is answering also; one man has no chance against an army; and he should have laughed—he who quizzes others must calculate upon being quizzed himself; and I really esteem Mr. Hobhouse and wish he had not done this. I would pay

\* Wedderburn Webster's 'Waterloo,' reviewed by Mr. Croker in *Q. R.*, No. 30.

any one to write against me. In a few days I shall send you our article on the third canto. You will not have occasion to answer that. An *Edinburgh* has not come out since the publication of your poems. Their article on Coleridge was *base*, after what had passed between you and the editor. Mr. Gordon has carefully deposited your spoils of Waterloo, which ornament my room, as the best and indeed only means I have of preserving them for you. The MSS. and bones \* have not appeared, and I will write about them. Sir John Malcolm is almost at Madras by this time; he left his sincere good wishes for you. I let him read the MSS. and he was in ecstasies. All your old friends *chez moi* remember you, and you are often the subject of their conversation, as their eye catches yours in the portrait, which I am now facing, and which is, I assure you, no small happiness to me to possess, as it eternally renews the association of your constancy to me.

I had a letter from Mr. Ward, to whom, at Paris, I sent the poems, and he is delighted; and Mr. Canning, most particularly so with the third canto. I now this time print 10,000 of my *Review*, and you are in it. I have the translation of a Chinese comedy in the press, and some 'Tales,' by Antar, a hundred years previous to the conversion of the Arabians to Mahomedanism; the 'Journal' of Captain Tuckey, who commanded the unfortunate expedition to Africa by the Congo. He and his officers died of fatigue and over-exertion; but in all other respects nothing could have been better planned or executed, and the 'Journal' is very interesting. This I will contrive to send you, and though not quite *à-propos*, I may here say that I have procured the tooth powder. I think you should write me a *note* of thanks for Lord Holland. Your friend, Sir James [Bland] Burges, with whom I dined yesterday at Mr. Croker's, often calls and talks to me about you. Walter Scott always mentions you with kindness in his letters, and he thinks nothing better than Canto III. Give me a poem—a good Venetian tale describing manners formerly from the story itself, and now from your own observations, and call it 'Marianna.'

JOHN MURRAY.

\* The bones picked up on the battlefield of Morat, and now in Mr. Murray's possession. (See 'Childe Harold,' Canto III., St. lxiii., note.)



The following letter from Mr. Sharon Turner to Mr. Murray, relates to the assignment of the copyright of both poems :—

*Mr. Turner to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I called to-day hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you, and to ask you how it is intended that the assignment of Lord Byron shall be executed. It must be either sent to him to be signed, or the power of attorney must be sent out to him to authorize some person here to sign for him. In either case, it will be necessary that the instrument should be witnessed by some English gentleman who resides usually in England, in case his evidence should ever be wanted. . . .

I thank you for Chateaubriand. He has many good things, and some bad ones. In talking of the Divinity of Monarchy he hurts it, and provokes sneers. The safe and solid ground of Royalty is its utility. While this continues, there is no fear for it. Utility is the principle that will make the subject attached to it, and the Monarch deserve the attachment. On Religion he says much that is very good ; but unfortunately he means by it, not that sort of intelligent religion which a nation so enlightened as the French require, and can only be affected by; but merely the old Papal System just as it was, and as no one now respects. He is like a man who should try to force you to take revolting physic, swearing at the same time that it is delicious food. But yet, with all its faults, I should think it is a book that would do good to the French mind by presenting some things to it that are well worth its consideration and discussion. I am sorry it has been suppressed. It should have been circulated, and answered where it is open to objection. The discussion would have done benefit to France. The French mind wants the ventilation of free and temperate discussion. But there can be no judgment and no political wisdom unless both sides of a question are raised and deliberated upon. It is narrow conduct and unsound policy to preclude temperate discussion. How little has it hurt, and how much has it improved, happy England—England still happy though

distressed—only temporarily distressed I believe. With every good wish,

Believe me, dear Murray, very sincerely,

SHN. TURNER.\*

The result of Mr. Turner's advice was, that Lord Byron granted a power of attorney to the Hon. Douglas Kinnaid, his banker, who had been associated with him in the Drury Lane management, and Mr. Kinnaid thenceforward arranged with Mr. Murray for the copyrights of Lord Byron's works.

At Mr. Murray's earnest request, Scott had consented to review the third Canto of 'Childe Harold' in the *Quarterly*. In forwarding the MS. he wrote as follows:—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, January 10th, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have this day sent under Croker's cover a review of Lord Byron's last poems. You know how high I hold his poetical reputation, but besides, one is naturally forced upon so many points of delicate consideration, that really I have begun and left off several times, and after all send the article to you with full power to cancel it if you think any part of it has the least chance of hurting his feelings. You know him better than I do, and you also know the

\* The writer of this acute letter had long been one of Mr. Murray's most intimate friends. During his anxious and busy life as a solicitor, he found time to collect materials for his 'History of the Anglo-Saxons,' the first volume of which was published in 1799, and the third and last, in 1805. He was the first English author who took pains to investigate the valuable information left us in the Anglo-Saxon records. The result was a work of great value, though since superseded by more elaborate histories. He afterwards published his 'History of the Norman Conquest to the Year 1509.' The first volume was published in 1814, the second in 1815, and the third and last in 1823. He was the author of other works, and a contributor to the *Quarterly Review* almost from the beginning.

public, and are aware that to make any successful impression on them the critic must appear to speak with perfect freedom. I trust I have not abused this discretion. I am sure I have not meant to do so, and yet during Lord Byron's absence, and under the present circumstances, I should feel more grieved than at anything that ever befell me if there should have slipped from my pen anything capable of giving him pain.

There are some things in the critique which are necessarily and unavoidably personal, and sure I am if he attends to it, which is unlikely, he will find advantage from doing so. I wish Mr. Gifford and you would consider every word carefully. If you think the general tenor is likely to make any impression on him, if you think it likely to hurt him either in his feelings or with the public, in God's name fling the sheets in the fire and let them be as *not written*. But if it appears, I should wish him to get an early copy, and that you would at the same time say I am the author, at your importunity. No one can honour Lord Byron's genius more than I do, and no one had so great a wish to love him personally, though personally we had not the means of becoming very intimate. In his family distress (deeply to be deprecated, and in which probably he can yet be excused) I still looked to some moment of reflection when bad advisers (and, except you were one, I have heard of few whom I should call good) were distant from the side of one who is so much the child of feeling and emotion. An opportunity was once afforded me of interfering, but things appeared to me to have gone too far; yet, even after all, I wish I had tried it, for Lord Byron always seemed to give me credit for wishing him sincerely well, and knew me to be superior to what Commodore Trunnion would call "the trash of literary envy and petty rivalry."

I got your letter in the country, but was able to do nothing till I came to town, both because I was occupied all day in my agricultural improvements, and on account of certain curious cramps in the stomach which occupied three nights very ungraciously, and threatened to send me out of this excellent world upon very short warning.

I have pressed Erskine to undertake the novel \* with all

\* There is no clue to the work here referred to.

the arguments I can use, and trust I shall succeed, as I have offered him all the accumulated lore which I am possessed of to facilitate his labour. I find James Ballantyne has already spoken to him on the subject. I only returned from Abbotsford last Saturday very unwell, but am now as stout as a lion.

Yours faithfully,

WALTER SCOTT.

Lord Byron's opinion of the article forms so necessary a complement to Walter Scott's sympathetic criticism of the man and the poet, that we make no excuse for reproducing it, as conveyed in a letter to Mr. Murray (March 3rd, 1817).

"In acknowledging the arrival of the article from the *Quarterly*, which I received two days ago, I cannot express myself better than in the words of my sister Augusta, who (speaking of it) says, that it is written in a spirit 'of the most feeling and kind nature.'

"It is, however, something more. It seems to me (as far as the subject of it may be permitted to judge) to be very well written as a composition, and I think will do the journal no discredit, because even those who condemn its partiality, must praise its generosity. The temptations to take another and a less favourable view of the question have been so great and numerous, that, what with public opinion, politics, &c., he must be a gallant as well as a good man who has ventured in that place, and at this time, to write such an article, even anonymously. Such things, however, are their own reward; and I even flatter myself that the writer, whoever he may be (and I have no guess), will not regret that the perusal of this has given me as much gratification as any composition of that nature could give, and more than any has given—and I have had a good many in my time of one kind or the other. It is not the mere praise, but there is a *tact* and a *delicacy* throughout, not only with regard to me but to *others*, which, as it had not been observed *elsewhere*, I had till now doubted whether it could be observed *anywhere*."

"When I tell you," he wrote to Moore a week later, "that Walter Scott is the author of the article in the *Quarterly*, you will agree with me that such an article is still more honourable to him than to myself."

We conclude this episode with the following letter from Scott :—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

Edinburgh, January 22nd, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received both your letters and all the enclosures, together with your note, which is more than the service required by one half. When I can assist you I am always happy to do it, but it is only particular subjects on which I can be really useful, so that I have neither right nor wish to be considered as above a common labourer in the trenches.

I am truly happy Lord Byron's article meets your ideas of what may make some impression on his mind. In genius, poetry has seldom had his equal, and if he has acted very wrong in some respects, he has been no worse than half the men of his rank in London who have done the same, and are not spoken of because not worth being railed against.

I am in the midst of plans and elevations for enlarging my cottage, which needed it, as you cannot but remember.

Yours truly,

W. S.

Lady Byron also wrote about the article :—

*Lady Byron to John Murray.*

7, Green Street, February 16th, 1817.

I leave London to-morrow, and should be obliged to you if you would let me have Dugald Stewart's Dissertation prefixed to the 'Encyclopædia' to read on my journey. My father also wishes to have Franklin's 'Letters' and Spence's 'Anecdotes.' May I trouble you to send them to me before nine to-morrow morning. I am inclined to

ask a question, which I hope you will not decline answering, if not contrary to your engagements. Who is the author of the review of 'Childe Harold' in the *Quarterly*?

Your faithful Servant,

A. I. BYRON.

Among other ladies who wrote on the subject of Lord Byron's works was Lady Caroline Lamb, who had caricatured him (as he supposed) in her 'Glenarvon.' Her letter is dated Welwyn, franked by William Lamb:—

*Lady Caroline Lamb to John Murray.*

November 5th, 1816.

You cannot need my assuring you that if you will entrust me with the new poems, none of the things you fear shall occur, in proof of which I ask you to enquire with yourself, whether, if a person in constant correspondence and friendship with another, yet keeps a perfect silence on one subject, she cannot do so when at enmity and at a distance. Now, I never boasted of seeing the poems first, never even told my mother I had done so, never ventured an opinion concerning them but to you, and only once I remember, when Lord Byron said he had sent them to me (which I believe was not true), did I ever speak to him of them. In short, I have so little vanity about seeing things before others, that, if it were not some curiosity and lurking interest for the Childe's works, you might not be requested so earnestly to send them; and, as it is, take your own way—I shall not murmur. How very well written and interesting Gifford's 'Life' is! How free from all affectation, and how very just his few observations! I only wish he had written more. William Lamb writes more in that style than any one. I see another 'Life' is coming out of Sheridan. Believe me therefore sincerely thankful for what I am going to receive—as the young lady said to a duchess when she was desired by her parents to say "Grace."

C. L.

This letter, to which no reply seems to have been sent, is followed by another, in which her ladyship says :—

“I wish to ask you one question : are you offended with me or my letter ? If so, I am sorry, but depend upon it if after seven years’ acquaintance you choose to cut off what you ever termed your left hand, I have too much gratitude towards you to allow of it. Accept therefore every apology for every supposed fault. I always write eagerly and in haste. I never read over what I have written. If therefore I said anything I ought not, pardon it—it was not intended ; and let me entreat you to remember a maxim I have found very useful to me, that there is nothing in this life worth quarrelling about, and that half the people we are offended with never intended to give us cause.

“Thank you for Holcroft’s ‘Life,’ which is extremely curious and interesting. I think you will relent and send me ‘Childe Harold’ before any one has it—this is the first time you have not done so—and the *Quarterly Review* ; and pray also any other book that is curious, or, at all events, tell me of it, as we have much time and I like your judgment. How I detest Mr. Frere—will you tell me why ? I send you a book ; pray read it—‘Lady Calantha Limb.’ The authoress, actuated by a holy zeal, says in her preface that she is resolved to turn me into ridicule. She chooses an easy task—too easy, I fear—yet fails, and makes a most blundering business. Wit’s razor’s edge she has not, but a most unkind tongue to make up for it. I know that ‘Timon’ succeeds, and I am delighted, as it contains, I think, more beauties than any play. I am sorry Phrynia and Timandra do not appear. Mrs. Mardyn and Mrs. Osgood would have looked beautiful, and, without letting them speak those very pretty lines addressed to them, might have been inserted. Mrs. Wilmot \* looks ill—like a fine ruin on which the setting sun is shining. I believe they never will forget your friendly and kind behaviour to them. Miss Wilmot spoke of you to me yesterday in a manner that could not fail to please you.

“My little chestnut horse is as well as ever. They say

\* Afterwards Lady Dacre, her tragedy of ‘Ina’ was published by Mr. Murray.

a black mare of mine (not the one I ride, but a beautiful one) has broken its back. This is all the news I have, except that the *Morning Chronicle* disgusts me, and that I wish a little enthusiasm for victories and commanders were allowed. I quite pine to see the *Quarterly Review* and 'Childe Harold.' Have mercy and send them, or I shall gallop to town to see you. Is 450 guineas too dear for a new barouche? If you know this let me know, as we of the country know nothing.

"Yours sincerely,

"C. L."

*Lady Caroline Lamb to John Murray.*

There was a time when you had not let so many days pass without asking me for a letter of Lord Byron's: indeed the absent and the present—the right hand and left—are both alike forgotten. I must tell you of my adventures to-night. I set out stark mad in white satin, as Tilburina did, to see Don Juan seized by the Italian; and scarce was my dear fatal name pronounced, "Lady Caroline *Lamb*," when some jocose footman said, "Sooner Lady Caroline *Wolf*." At this too just criticism several warm defenders sallied forth amongst the same precious herd; whilst they were all fighting, I was very soon kidnapped by two rack-chairmen, who insisted on carrying me each into his respective chair, I being all the time vainly desirous of getting in and not out of the Opera House. It so chanced that I was very fine, having dined out in diamonds and feathers. When I therefore got safe up with a crowd of plumed attendants, my unfortunate dog, that long-cared-for dog, covered with mud like Lord Something's rat, appeared entering the vestibule. At this sight soldiers and servants shouted forth "A fox!" and began hissing it down. Judge of my situation. I was either obliged to give up this dear shabby cur, who had followed my carriage and me, or own a friend in such disguise that few had dared do so. The latter was however my choice, and being much too frightened and late, after all these adventures, I turned back to find my carriage almost carried away by Irish boys and drunken chairmen, one of whom, to the indignation of the rest, constantly vociferated, "This is my lady."—"Your lady, d——n you."—"Yes, my lady,"—and sure



enough he, like the dog, proved a mendicant pensioner, when a blaze of light showed him to me like the ghost. Now, fare thee well ; excuse all this nonsense. Go to the play on Friday. Come round and see me, or come with me the first night our opera box is vacant, which it never has been yet. But I shall not fail to let you know.

Yours,

THE APOSTATE.

In strong contrast with these effusions is the following letter from Mrs. Graham :—

*Mrs. Graham to John Murray.*

March, 1817.

A thousand thanks, my dear sir, for the loan of the Journal, which I have perused with the greatest interest.\* A more superstitious age would certainly have believed him possessed of the *art magic*, so completely does he continue to force attention and sympathy wherever he pleases. He says, "I have lately repeopled my mind with Nature." Oh why, when so alive to the charms of outward nature, will he not open his mind to the beauty which swells around us and within us, and need only to be desired to be manifest in brighter glory than ever adorned the fresh rising of the sun from the Eastern ocean. Why shut his heart to the tide of gentle affection, where, more clearly than on the waters of his favourite lake, the face of heaven is reflected. Then he provokes me with fancying himself hated. Good God ! did he know how many have with breathless interest watched his steps, grieved for him, praised him, and where they could not, turned aside their eyes like the patriarch's pious son, that they might not look upon his frailties, he would never return all this with misanthropy. Oh no, he would learn that many are all, nay more than all, they seem. But I always forget myself when I think of our greatest genius. Therefore I will hasten to thank you for the two dramas. The French one amuses me, the other does so for a different reason. A glorious triumph to the Laureate !

Yours very truly,

MARIA GRAHAM.

\* Byron's 'Swiss Journal,' published in Moore's 'Life.'

In sending home the MS. of the first act of 'Manfred,' Lord Byron wrote, giving but unsatisfactory accounts of his own health. Mr. Murray replied :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

March 20th, 1817.

MY LORD,

I have to acknowledge your kind letter, dated the 3rd, received this hour; but I am sorry to say that it has occasioned me great anxiety about your health. You are not wont to cry before you are hurt; and I am apprehensive that you are worse even than you allow. Pray keep quiet and take care of yourself. My *Review* shows you that you are worth preserving and that the world yet loves you. If you become seriously worse, I entreat you to let me know it, and I will fly to you with a physician; an Italian one is only a preparation for the anatomist. I will not tell your sister of this, if you will tell me true. I had hopes that this letter would have confirmed my expectations of your speedy return, which has been stated by Mr. Kinnaird, and repeated to me by Mr. Davies, whom I saw yesterday, and who promises to write. We often indulge our recollections of you, and he allows me to believe that I am one of the few who really know you.

Gifford gave me yesterday the first act of 'Manfred,' with a delighted countenance, telling me it was wonderfully poetical, and desiring me to assure you that it well merits publication. I shall send proofs to you with his remarks, if he have any; it is a wild and delightful thing, and I like it myself hugely.

I had a letter from Mrs. Leigh yesterday, enclosing one for your Lordship. Mrs. Leigh promises me a visit by the end of the month. The public very generally accord with your opinion of the critique in the *Quarterly*, and it has actually, as your friend Heber said, produced a sensation. It is equally honourable to Scott's head and heart, and I rejoice much in my sagacity in soliciting him to write it. Gifford said to me, "Lord Byron is much obliged to you." Scott was much satisfied with it himself, and still more by the praise which has followed it; and this will be raised and confirmed by your approbation which, in substance, I

shall venture to communicate. The article is likely to have proved the more efficacious from the good fortune of its having appeared in perhaps our very best number, of which I have sold already almost 10,000 copies. Of the next number I am printing 12,000; the sale is not exceeded by the *Edinburgh Review*. The article in that journal, which I also sent you, is very good and satisfactory; but ours is peculiar, and therefore the more attractive.

Mr. Gifford, who is at my elbow, and to whom I have just read your letter—at least that part of it referring to the *Review* and to the *Procession*—desires me to present his sincere regards to you, and to assure you how much he joins in my anxieties and regrets at your Lordship's illness. However, I flatter myself with hoping that your next will tell us it has very materially abated.

I have just received, in a way perfectly unaccountable, a MS. from St. Helena—with not a word. I suppose it to be originally written by Buonaparte or his agents.—It is very curious his life, in which each event is given in almost a word—a battle described in a short sentence. I call it therefore simply *Manuscrit venu de Ste. Hélène d'une manière inconnue*.\* Lord Holland has a motion on our treatment of Buonaparte at St. Helena for Wednesday next; and on Monday I shall publish. You will have seen Buonaparte's Memorial on this subject, complaining bitterly of all; pungent but very injudicious, as it must offend all the other allied powers to be reminded of their former prostration.

I long to be admitted to a sight of the *Miniature*—how many have I seen? Wedderburn Webster is again at work; he is composing a pamphlet on the subject of the recent suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act.

April 12th, 1817.

Our friend Southey has got into a confounded scrape. Some twenty years ago, when he knew no better and was a

\* This work attracted a considerable amount of attention in London, but more especially in Paris, as purporting to be a chapter of autobiography by Napoleon, then a prisoner in St. Helena. It was in all probability the work of some of the deposed Emperor's friends and adherents in Paris, issued for the purpose of keeping his name prominently before the world.

Republican, he wrote a certain drama, entitled, 'Wat Tyler,' in order to disseminate wholesome doctrine amongst the *lower* orders. This he presented to a friend, with a fraternal embrace, who was at that time enjoying the cool reflection generated by his residence in Newgate. This friend, however, either thinking its publication might prolong his durance, or fancying that it would not become profitable as a speculation, quietly put it into his pocket ; and now that the author has most manfully laid about him, slaying Whigs and Republicans by the million, this cursed friend publishes ; but what is yet worse, the author, upon suing for an injunction, to proceed in which he is obliged to swear that he is the author, is informed by the Chancellor that it is seditious—and that for sedition there is no copyright. I will inclose either now or in my next a second copy, for as there is no copyright, everyone has printed it, which will amuse you.

A severe attack of low fever, compelled Lord Byron to break away from Venice and his companions there, in the spring of 1817. His first halting-place on the way to Rome was Ferrara, where he visited the Court in which, according to Gibbon, Hugo and Parisina were beheaded, and the Cell of Tasso, which elicited from him the "The Lament of Tasso," forwarded to Mr. Murray a few days later from Florence.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

May 13th, 1817.

MY LORD,

Your favour of the 23rd arrived yesterday, and I instantly sent the lines upon Tasso to Mr. Gifford, who called with them soon afterwards, and assured me that they were exceedingly good, and that there was besides a difference in the style, which would, by being novel, prove additionally interesting.

Moore's Poem is to appear on the 22nd inst., and I will try to send it. Mr. Sheil, the author of 'Adelaide,' has had most extraordinary success on the stage with his tragedy, called 'The Apostate,' merely from forming a

series of interesting situations. I read it with Mr. Gifford in MS., and we both thought it impossible that it could succeed. I went, fully convinced that it would be damned ; but nothing could exceed the applause which it drew throughout. It had the advantage of giving four exceedingly appropriate characters to C. Kemble, Macready, Young, and Miss O'Neil ; neither of whom ever had an opportunity of acting better. Its success has been complete, and it must be acted as long as four good actors can be brought together.

The attractions of Venice proved too strong for Lord Byron ; by the end of May he was there again, but not before his brief visit to Rome had inspired him to undertake the fourth canto of 'Childe Harold.' The summer was employed "in working up his impressions," and on July 15th and 20th he wrote to Mr. Murray that the canto was completed, and only required to be "copied and polished," but at the same time he began to "barter" for the price of the canto, so completely had his old scruples on this score disappeared. Mr. Murray acknowledged the two letters as follows :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

August 5th, 1817.

MY LORD,

This day has brought me your letter of the 15th of July, adding another to the many instances of your truly kind indulgences to my unpardonable indolence. I am very sorry indeed to find that there is so little chance of seeing you soon in England, and I fancy you will suffer equal grief when you learn that next year you will certainly have a visit from me. In the meantime, I will endeavour to send a regular journal of news, literary and domestic. I perceive, by your reckoning by stanzas, that you are within fourteen stanzas of completing your *opus magnum*, for such I think it is your determination to make 'Childe Harold.' The first stanza Mr. Gifford thinks very highly of, as does Mr. Frere, and many more

to whom I have ventured to show it. You need not be assured how much I am rejoiced at the prospect of again opening my literary campaign under such brilliant auspices.

By the way, Polidori has sent me his tragedy! Do me the kindness to send by return of post a *delicate* declension of it, which I engage faithfully to copy. I am truly sorry that he will employ himself in a way so ill-suited to his genius; for he is not without literary talents.\*

I sent you copies of 'Manfred' and of 'Tasso,' which are, I trust, printed correctly. They are both, but particularly the former, greatly admired by the best critics; but they soar above the Million. Mr. Frere, I think I told you, says that it and the third canto place you in a higher class of poets—that is the very highest. Amongst the books I intruded upon Mr. Kinnaird was 'Coleridge's Life and Opinions,' which will I think interest you. You will pardon the occasional obscurities and, I fear, absurdities, for its power in most parts. I think you will like my 'MSS. de St. Hélène.' Talma said, when he read it, that he conversed with Buonaparte. I sent him one splendidly bound, and he wrote me a letter expressing his delight at what reminded him of past glory.

You will have heard, not without regret, of the premature death of Madame de Staël, who, with all her faults, was an excellent person. I think she had a good heart; and I know that she was very kind to me.

She confessed her marriage, and acknowledged a child, a son, born when she was forty-nine.

Mr. Scrope Davies often does me the favour to call, and we discuss your letters and poetry. I saw Mrs. Leigh three days ago, in some trouble at the entrance of the whooping cough into her family, but otherwise well. Mr. Moore, I believe I told you, is gone to Paris with Mr. Rogers, who *dedicates* all his time to him. Whilst Mr. Kinnaird is with you, I trust you will do me the favour to confide any commissions—particularly of cutting off Mr. Hanson's head—heart or bowels he hath not—and anything else. Your Armenian friends have this moment presented themselves with your letter. I will take all their grammars and do all otherwise to serve and assist them.

\* Lord Byron at once acceded to this request by writing the well-known verses commencing—"Dear Doctor, I have read your play."

I will recommend them to Sir John Malcolm, at Madras. I am very sorry they miss the value of Mr. Kinnaird's more powerful aid.

August 15th, 1817.

"By this time Mr. Kinnaird has, I hope, reached you in safety, and presented all my packets of poetry and tooth powder; and hereafter I hope to receive your comments on the one portion, and your thanks for the other. You will readily believe how much I am delighted to learn that the fourth canto of 'Childe Harold' is completed, and if you please to accept the exchange, I shall readily present fifteen hundred guineas for the copyright; but I entreat you to let me have the original MS.

"I have a letter from Mr. Whishaw, dated Paris, August 10th, in which he begs me to contradict the report of Madame de Staël having become Catholic, which he assures me, from good authority, was not the case."

In order to save time, some corrections in the proofs of 'Manfred' made by Mr. Gifford, were, as on many previous occasions, adopted without consulting Lord Byron. This proceeding in the present instance irritated him, and drew down some severe censures on Murray, who replied:

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 9th, 1817.

Mr. Gifford, after consulting me, omitted your close of the drama from no other motive than because he thought that the words you allude to lessened the effect; and I was convinced of this myself, and the omission to send a copy to you earlier was merely that, having no direct opportunity, it did not before occur to me to send it by post; and, upon my honour, the alteration was so trivial in my mind that I forgot the importance which it might have in the eye of an author. I have written up this day to have the page cancelled and your reading restored. In future I propose to send you every proof by post, with any suggestions of Mr. G. upon them for your approbation. The slight errors of the press which you point out in the fifth volume have been corrected against a new edition. I

assure you that I take no umbrage at irritability which will occasionally burst from a mind like yours ; but I sometimes feel a deep regret that in our pretty long intercourse I appear to have failed to show that a man in my situation may possess the feelings and principles of a gentleman ; most certainly I do think that, from personal attachment, I could venture as much in any shape for your service as any of those who have the good fortune to be ranked amongst your friends.

How I have omitted to tell you what I have heard of ‘Manfred,’ I cannot conceive, but so it appears to be. All the higher critics, such as Frere, are in ecstasy with it, averring that it places you far above all your former efforts ; but it is not so popular with the general reader, because they go through it at once, expecting to find their pleasure in the intricacy and interest of the plot, and being therein disappointed, they do not recur to the beauties which they had hastily passed over ; to conclude, it is less popular, but more praised. Mr. Crabbe did not think ‘Tasso’ equal to yourself ; but, he added, who could have written it but Lord Byron ?

By the way, I asked Gifford and some others how Scott would like to be called the Scottish Ariosto, and no one can tell why you should call him so, except, perhaps, on account of his adopting the same measure.

Mr. Hobhouse spent a considerable part of the year 1817 travelling about in Italy, whither he had gone principally to see Lord Byron. He wrote to Mr. Murray :—

*Mr. Hobhouse to John Murray.*

Venice, December 7th, 1817.

As I find you have been good enough to remember me in sundry letters to these parts of the world, and as it may be possible that my repeated acknowledgments may have been, in the press of matter, put off, like Dr. Drowsy’s sermons, to a better opportunity, I have discovered at last an excuse for writing to you, without having anything to tell which can interest you, or to be of any other service than the disburthening of my conscience by duly registering the above thanks for your attentions. I verily believe



this place to be the dullest in Christendom, and yet, from congenial qualities perhaps, I have been here and about here since last August. The Italian is at no time the gayest of his species or the most approachable, and although the Venetians, time out of mind, have been the fondest of strangers of any of their fellow Cis-alpines, yet their present disasters and the weight of German depression (for it is not oppression) have made them as little inviting in all senses of the word as can easily be imagined. I should not presume to say this much if I did more than copy their own confessions. As for the Austrians, they are amiable nowhere but at Vienna. Their inaptitude for these latitudes is beyond all expression or belief. Doubtless Lord B. told you of the order of the Aulic Council for the Archbishop of Aquileia to go to St. Mark's in a coach and six; as if the Lord Mayor were ordered to go to St. James's Palace in a gondola. The other day they sank a considerable sum in sinking for a well in one of the artificial islands here. 'Twas in vain that the Venetians assured them that springs never had been, were, or would be found in soil made out of basketfuls of earth thrown upon stakes and pebbles. They delved and dived, and were not to be persuaded by the salt water spirting in their faces at every blow. I don't know that they have abandoned their researches even now. They bought the great Cornaro palace here the other year for 100,000 francs—about one-tenth of the value—the architecture of Sansovino, and one of the chief ornaments of the Great Canal. They put a German commissioner and a German stove into their new purchase, and between one and the other burnt it down.

If any one writes a book of travels without telling the truth about the masters and the subjects in this most unfortunate country, he deserves more than damnation and a dull sale, and I trust you will take care he has a niche—forgive the word—in your temple of infamy, the *Quarterly*. I heard that Champion Scott\* was collecting five hundred pounds worth of news for Longman in these parts. If

\* This was John Scott, author of 'Sketches of Manners, Scenery, &c., in the French Provinces, Switzerland, and Italy,' afterwards killed in a duel in consequence of a quarrel arising out of some articles in *Blackwood's Magazine*.

any but a gentleman and a scholar, and an accomplished man in every way, presumes to hazard such an undertaking, "be ready," Mr. Murray, "with all your thunderbolts: dash him to pieces!"

I saw this the moment I crossed the Alps, and, in spite of bad and inveterate habit, shut my journal at once. There is a wide field of glory open for any and for all answering the above description; but it would perhaps be almost impossible to find the requisite variety of acquirement and talent in one individual. The work should be done, like a cyclopede dictionary, by departments. I don't mean North and South, East and West, though that is no bad plan, but by subjects—literature, antiquities, manners, politics, &c. We have nothing, really nothing, except Mr. Forsyth's sketch, which, so far as it goes, is a most extraordinary performance. I have tried it by the best test—that is, by putting it into the hands of one or two Italians, who owned, with a sigh, indeed, the unhappy resemblance.

A word or two on my own movements, because they interest you. I shall set out with your 'Childe' in about three weeks, from Venice, and shall proceed as fast as bad roads and surly postillions will allow, to Milan, Turin, Lyons, Paris, Calais, according to the post book, to London.

Your new acquisition is a very fine finish to the three cantos already published, and, if I may trust to a taste vitiated—I say it without affectation—by an exclusive attention and attachment to that school of ancient and obsolete poetry of which your friend Mr. Gifford furnished us with the last specimen in his 'Baviad,' it is the best of all his lordship's productions. The world will not, to be sure, find that freshness and novelty which is to be discovered only at the opening of a mine. The metal, whatever may be its quantity or quality, must in some degree cease to surprise and delight as it continues to be worked, and nothing more can be hoped than that it should not become less valuable by being more plentiful. In spite of similes, however, it is possible that all other readers may agree with my simple self in liking this fourth canto better than anything Lord B. has ever written. I must confess I feel an affection for it more than ordinary, as part of it was begot, as it were, under my own eyes; for some of the stanzas owe their birth to our morning

walk or evening ride at La Mara. I shall conclude with telling you about Lord B.'s bust. It is a masterpiece by Thorwaldsen \* who is thought by most judges to surpass Canova in this branch of sculpture. The likeness is perfect: the artist worked *con amore*, and told me it was the finest head he had ever under his hand. I would have had a wreath round the brows, but the poet was afraid of being mistaken for a king or a conqueror, and his pride or modesty made him forbid the band. However, when the marble comes to England I shall place a golden laurel round it in the ancient style, and, if it is thought good enough, suffix the following inscription, which may serve at least to tell the name of the portrait and allude to the excellence of the artist, which very few lapidary inscriptions do:—

“In vain would flattery steal a wreath from fame,  
And Rome's best sculptor only half succeed,  
If England owned no share in Byron's name  
Nor hailed the laurel she before decreed.”

Of course you are very welcome to a copy—I don't mean of the verses, but of the bust. But, with the exception of Mr. Kinnaird, who has applied, and Mr. Davies, who may apply, no other will be granted. Farewell, dear Sir.

Ever yours truly obliged,

JOHN C. HOBHOUSE.

The fourth canto duly reached London in Mr. Hobhouse's portmanteau, and was published in the spring of 1818.

\* The bust was made for Mr. Hobhouse, at his expense. Lord Byron said, “I would not pay the price of a Thorwaldsen bust for any head and shoulders, except Napoleon's, or my children's, or some ‘absurd womankind's,’ as Monkbarns calls them, or my sister's.”

## CHAPTER XVI.

LORD BYRON'S DEALINGS WITH MR. MURRAY—*continued*—  
THE DEATH OF ALLEGRA, ETC.

LORD BYRON informed Mr. Murray, on the 12th of October, 1817, that he had written "a poem in or after the excellent manner of Mr. Whistlecraft (whom I take to be Frere);" and in a subsequent letter he said, "Mr. Whistlecraft has no greater admirer than myself. I have written a story in eighty-nine stanzas in imitation of him, called 'Beppo,' the short name for Giuseppe, that is the Joe, of the Italian Joseph." Lord Byron required that it should be printed anonymously, and in any form that Mr. Murray pleased. The manuscript of the poem was not, however, sent off until the beginning of 1818; and it reached the publisher about a month later. When it was set up in type and published, Mr. Murray sent Lord Byron the following letter:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

June 16th, 1818.

MY LORD,

Having waited, from day to day, in the incessant expectation of the opportunity of sending my letters and various packages by Hanson's clerk, I gathered from Mr. Hobhouse yesterday the continued uncertainty of his setting out, but I can therefore delay no longer to thank you, in the first instance, for your several kind as well as entertaining letters. Mr. Hobhouse told me yesterday that Hanson had not yet been paid any sums upon your account by your bankers; and I have therefore sent this morning to Messrs. Ransom, Morland, and Co. a thousand guineas,

desiring them to remit it to you by this evening's post. With the remaining 1,500 guineas I shall be prepared against your order ; indeed, if you drew upon me for this sum, at sixty days' sight, it would settle this matter at once ; but this as you may find most convenient. I received very safely, a few days ago, by the care of Signor Gio. Bata. Missiaglia \* (I was *very much obliged indeed* by the books and periodicals which you were so good as to send me), the curious collection of letters described in the above-mentioned letter belonging to the Dr. Aglietti, which I gave, in the first instance, to Mr. Gifford to read. He thinks them very interesting as autographs ; but with the exception of those pointed out by you, there are few that would afford more than extracts, to be selected by a judicious editor. I think D'Israeli, from the nature of his studies, might be trusted with their selection ; and I shall be able to send them to him to-morrow, and, by this day week, I will propose a sum for them to your friend the proprietor. Pope, whose unmanly persecution of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and of her friend Lord Hervey arose from disappointed love, is, you see, no less insidiously spoken of by Lord Hervey, whose letters are good but not of the first water. Lord Orford beats them all. Gray's letter excellent ; and Lady M. W. Montagu's ideas equal to her literary character. I have been lately reading again her letters, particularly her latest ones in her old age to her daughter, which are as full of wisdom, almost proverbial, as of beauty. I should think you may stumble upon a letter full of anecdotes of hers, which I beg you to hoard up, as I am the proprietor of her Works, and would like to introduce a new edition with any variety of this kind.

Mr. Frere is at length satisfied that you are the author of 'Beppo.' He had no conception that you possessed the protean talent of Shakespeare, thus to assume at will so different a character. He, and every one, continues in the same very high opinion of its great beauties. I am glad to find that you are disposed to pursue this strain, which has occasioned so much delight. Do you never think of prose ?

\* The proprietor of the Apollo Library and the principal publisher and bookseller in Venice, to whom Lord Byron gave an introduction to Murray, April 12, 1818. See Moore's Life.

—though, like Lord Hervey, I suspect your thoughts fall so naturally into rhyme that you are obliged to think twice to put them in prose. Yet the specimen of prose, in the dedication to Hobhouse,\* is so much admired and talked of, that I should much like to surprise the world with a more complete sample,—to be given at first anonymously. None of the dons in criticism have yet taken the field for Canto IV., but the next numbers of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* will certainly contain papers upon it, which I shall put into a cover and send to you at once. The whole canto has been quoted ten times over, in the different scraps which diversity of taste has selected, in the monthly, weekly, and daily journals of the metropolis and country—so that some have selected each part as the best; and, in conclusion, the public will be as eager to receive anything from your pen as ever. I am now meditating, or rather have made preparation, to print a uniform edition of your poems in three octavo volumes. ‘Childe Harold,’ four cantos, with your own notes, will form the first volume; all the ‘Tales,’ including ‘Beppo,’ will constitute the second; and the ‘Miscellaneous Poems,’ ‘Manfred,’ &c., will fill the third. These I intend to print very handsomely, and to sell very cheap, so that every facility shall be given for their popularity. I propose to print at the same time the whole works in five small volumes; in which size, when I print the 3rd and 4th cantos and ‘Beppo,’ they will occupy seven, which is, perhaps, too many. Westall has nearly completed twenty-five beautiful designs to accompany these editions; and I trust that you will have no objection to my engraving again Phillips’s portrait, which every unbiassed person thinks by far the finest.

I have just put forth two more cantos of Whistlecraft—which the knowing ones think excellent, and of which the public think nothing, for they cannot see the drift of it. I have not sold 500 copies of the first parts yet; and of ‘Beppo’ I have sold six times that quantity in a sixth part of the time, and before, indeed, it is generally known to be yours. I have heard no word more from Mr. Sotheby; and as to my having ventured upon any alteration or omission, I should as soon have scooped one of my eyes out. I am anxious to know if you are satisfied with

\* Of the Fourth Canto of ‘Childe Harold.’

Mr. Hobhouse's notes. The parts he thinks best of are those upon the Antiquities ; but we feel very little interest for them, and much prefer the ' Essay on Italian Literature,' which, if enlarged with your Lordship's assistance and with the addition of translations, would become a popular work, as well as one much wanted. Hobhouse set out last night for Dorchester (worn absolutely to skin and bone in a vexatious and hopeless canvass of Westminster for Mr. Kinnaid), in the neighbourhood of which he has some prospect of parliamentary success. I am glad he avoided Westminster, for after swallowing Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage by Ballot, what scope can a man have left himself?

Your Lordship's obliged Servant,  
JOHN MURRAY.\*

Mr. Murray's next letter to Lord Byron was :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

July 7th, 1818.

I do assure you I have rarely greater pleasure than when I am addressing you, unless it be when I am honoured by the favour of a letter from you. Latterly, I conceived that Mr. Hobhouse had been so constantly in communication with you that my omissions would not have been heeded, but I implore forgiveness, and will be less remiss in future.

I assure you that the success of the fourth canto has been equal to either of the former volumes. It is more desultory, as Gifford said at first, but the parts taken separately are each and all considered equal, and in some instances surpassing, anything preceding them. No critique of note has yet appeared upon the poem, but if anything able on the subject appears I shall instantly send it to you.

You will have read with surprise and regret an account of the death of your friend Monk Lewis† on his return from a second voyage to the West Indies. He sent me his MS. notes upon the place to read, and very curious

\* The answer to this letter, under date July 10, 1818, is printed in Moore's Life.

† Matthew Gregory Lewis, commonly called "Monk" Lewis, after the title of his first novel. He had just died at the age of forty-two,

indeed they were, and I hope they will not be lost. Wilmot has positively succeeded at Newcastle-under-Lyne, and is returned M.P. Your cousin George has another daughter lately, and your friend Lady William Russell has just lost one. I fancy that the chief reason for your not hearing from either Hobhouse or Kinnaird is that for the last four months they have been completely absorbed in politics, though neither has got into Parliament. They appear to have cut the Whigs and plunged head-over-ears into Burdettism, Annual Parliaments, and Universal Suffrage by Ballot! Brougham has lost his election for Westmoreland.

May I hope that you will favour me with some work to open my campaign in November with! Have you not another lively tale like 'Beppo'? or will you not give me some prose in three volumes?—all the adventures that you have undergone, seen, heard of, or imagined, with your reflections on life and manners. Do tell me that I may at any rate expect something by the end of September. There will be three more volumes of 'Tales of my Landlord' this month, which I will convey to you as speedily as possible, with Madame de Staël's new work, 'Sur la Révolution Française,' which has fallen almost stillborn from the press. It is by no means good.

Lord Byron, in the midst of his Venetian and Ravenna life, seems to have forgotten his sister, Mrs. Leigh, who was much in want of ready cash about this time, and frequently applied to Mr. Murray, and from him obtained what she needed. In one of her letters she writes:—

*Mrs. Leigh to John Murray.*

July, 1818.

I return the *Edinburgh Review*, with a thousand thanks for your kindness in lending it to me. It will surely please him (Byron) whom it most concerns. I enclose a stupid letter from him, and I think you had better be silent on the subject of his silence to me. After all, regrets are

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and in Byron's 'Detached Thoughts' is an account of him concluding thus: "Poor fellow! he died—a martyr to his new riches—of a second visit to Jamaica."



selfish, and that is a disposition I think we cannot too much check. If he is happy, why should I disturb him by my laments? He knows full well all I could say. I had not forgot my promise of the 'Hours of Idleness,' but my books are not yet all come. I send you one which I should be delighted if you would accept . . . Scratch out the name on the title-page. When the others come you may, if you prefer it, make an exchange.

Mr. Murray writes again :—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

September 22nd, 1818.

I was much pleased to find, on my arrival from Edinburgh on Saturday night, your letter of the 26th of August. The former one of the 21st I received whilst in Scotland. The Saturday and Sunday previous I passed most delightfully with Walter Scott, who was incessant in his inquiries after your welfare. He entertains the noblest sentiments of regard towards you, and speaks of you with the best feelings. I walked about ten miles with him round a very beautiful estate, which he has purchased by degrees, within two miles of his favourite Melrose. He has nearly completed the centre and one wing of a castle on the banks of the Tweed, where he is the happiness as well as pride of the whole neighbourhood. He is one of the most hospitable, merry, and entertaining of mortals. He would, I am confident, do anything to serve you ; and as the paper \* which I now enclose is a second substantial proof of the interest he takes in your literary character, perhaps it may naturally enough afford occasion for a letter from you to him. I sent you by Mr. Hanson four volumes of a second series of 'Tales of my Landlord,' and four others are actually in the press. Scott does not yet avow them, but no one doubts his being their author. I should have much liked to see how you look in a full suit of prose ; and the slight drapery which you have occasionally put on affords a very promising specimen. I regret, of course, your procrastination of the Memoir ; but this is a subject of delicacy which should be regulated entirely by your own feelings ; but the 'Tales' \* I yet hope the spirit may move

\* The Review of the fourth Canto of 'Childe Harold,' *Q. R.*, No. 37.

you to complete. I hope, in the search for Lady M. W. Montagu's most interesting letters, the Doctor † may stumble upon some others of value. You told me some time ago that a lady was writing the 'Life of Lady M. W. Montagu.' As there may probably be some original anecdotes of that part of it which was passed in Italy, I should be glad to be favoured with a copy of it as soon as possible. I sent by Mr. Hanson a number or two of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and I have in a recent parcel sent the whole. I think that you will find in it a very great share of talent, and some most incomparable fun; and as I have purchased half the copy-right of it, I shall feel very much obliged if you would occasionally send me some anonymous (if you please) fun to add to it, and any news, literary or scientific, that may fall in your way. If any of your literary acquaintances are disposed to communicate interesting articles, you may insure to them ten guineas a sheet; and if there be any poor fellows to whom you would like to bestow such a trifle, you can direct me accordingly. John Wilson, who wrote the article on Canto IV. of 'Childe Harold' (of which, by the way, I am anxious to know your opinion), has very much interested himself in the journal, and has communicated some most admirable papers. Indeed, he possesses very great talents and a variety of knowledge. I send you a very well-constructed kaleidoscope, a newly-invented toy which, if not yet seen in Venice, will I trust amuse some of your female friends.

JOHN MURRAY.

The following letter is inserted here, as it does not appear in Moore's 'Biography':—

*Lord Byron to John Murray.*

Venice, November 24th, 1818.

DEAR MR. MURRAY,

Mr. Hanson has been here a week, and went five days ago. He brought nothing but his papers, some corn-

\* Byron had written to Mr. Murray telling him that he "had several things begun, verse and prose," that "the 'Tales' also are in an unfinished state. I can fix no time for their completion: they are *not* in the best manner."

† Dr. Aglietti, who was collecting these letters for publication.

rubbers, and a kaleidoscope. "For what we have received the Lord make us thankful"! for without His aid I shall not be so. He—Hanson—left everything else in *Chancery Lane* whatever, except your copy-papers for the last Canto,\* &c., which having a degree of parchment he brought with him. You may imagine his reception; he swore the books were a "waggon-load"; if they were, he should have come in a waggon; he would in that case, have come quicker than he did.

Lord Lauderdale set off from hence twelve days ago accompanied by a cargo of Poesy directed to Mr. Hobhouse, all spick and span, and in MS.; you will see what it is like. I have given it to Master Southey, and he shall have more before I have done with him.

You may make what I say here as public as you please, more particularly to Southey, whom I look upon—and will say so publicly—to be a dirty, lying rascal, and will prove it in ink—or in his blood, if I did not believe him to be too much of a poet to risk it! If he has forty reviews at his back, as he has the *Quarterly*, I would have at him in his scribbling capacity now that he has begun with me; but I will do nothing underhand; tell him what I say from *me* and every one else you please.

You will see what I have said, if the parcel arrives safe. I understand Coleridge went about repeating Southey's lie with pleasure. I can believe it, for I had done him what is called a favour. . . . I can understand Coleridge's abusing me—but how or why *Southey*, whom I had never obliged in any sort of way, or done him the remotest service, should go about fibbing and calumniating is more than I readily comprehend. Does he think to put me down with his *Canting*, not being able to do it with his poetry? We will try the question. I have read his review of Hunt, where he has attacked Shelley in an oblique and shabby manner. Does he know what that review has done? I will tell you; it has *sold* an edition of the 'Revolt of Islam' which otherwise nobody would have thought of reading, and few who read can understand, I for one.

Southey would have attacked me too there, if he durst, further than by hints about Hunt's friends in general, and some outcry about an "Epicurean System" carried on by

\* Of 'Childe Harold.'

men of the most opposite habits and tastes and opinions in life and poetry (I believe) that ever had their names in the same volume—Moore. Byron, Shelley, Hazlitt, Haydon, Leigh Hunt, Lamb. What resemblance do ye find among all or any of these men? And how could any sort of system or plan be carried on or attempted amongst them? However, let Mr. Southey look to himself; since the wine is tapped, he shall drink it.

I got some books a few weeks ago—many thanks. Amongst them is Israeli's new edition; it was not fair in you to show him my copy of his former one, with all the marginal notes and nonsense made in Greece when I was not two-and-twenty, and which certainly were not meant for his perusal, nor for that of his readers.

I have a great respect for Israeli and his talents, and have read his works over and over and over repeatedly, and been amused by them greatly, and instructed often. Besides, I hate giving pain, unless provoked; and he is an author, and must feel like his brethren; and although his Liberality repaid my marginal flippancies with a compliment—the highest compliment—that don't reconcile me to myself—nor to *you*. It was a breach of confidence to do this without my leave; I don't know a living man's book I take up so often or lay down more reluctantly than Israeli's, and I never will forgive you—that is, for many weeks. If he had got out of humour I should have been less sorry; but even then I should have been sorry; but really he has heaped his "coals of fire" so handsomely upon my head that they burn unquenchably.

You ask me of the two reviews \*—I will tell you. Scott's is the review of one poet on another—his friend; Wilson's, the review of a poet too, on another—his *Idol*; for he likes me better than he chooses to avow to the public with all his eulogy. I speak judging only from the article, for I don't know him personally.

Here is a long letter—can you read it?

Yours ever,

B.

\* Of 'Childe Harold' in the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh*.

In the course of September, 1818, Lord Byron communicated to Mr. Moore that he had finished the first canto of a poem in the style and manner of 'Beppo.' "It is called," he said, "'Don Juan,' and is meant to be a little quietly facetious upon everything; but," he added, "I doubt whether it is not—at least so far as it has yet gone—too free for these very modest days." In January, 1819, Lord Byron requested Mr. Murray to print for private distribution fifty copies of 'Don Juan.' Mr. Murray urged him to occupy himself with some great work worthy of his reputation. "This you have promised to Gifford long ago, and to Hobhouse and Kinnaird since." Lord Byron, however, continued to write out his 'Don Juan,' and sent the second canto in April, 1819, together with the 'Letter of Julia,' to be inserted in the first canto.

Mr. Murray, in acknowledging the receipt of the first and second cantos, was not so congratulatory as he had formerly been. The verses contained, no doubt, some of the author's finest poetry, but he had some objections to suggest. "I think," he said, "you may modify or substitute other words for the lines on Romilly, whose death should save him." But Byron entertained an extreme detestation for Romilly, because, he said, he had been "one of my assassins," and had sacrificed him on "his legal altar"; and the verse\* was allowed to stand over. "Your history," wrote Murray, "of the plan of the progress of 'Don Juan' is very entertaining, but I am clear for sending him to hell, because he may favour us with a description of some of the characters whom he finds there." Mr. Murray suggested the removal of some offensive words in Canto II. "These," he said, "ladies may not read; the Shipwreck is a little

\* St. 15, First Canto.

too particular, and out of proportion to the rest of the picture. But if you do anything it must be done with extreme caution; think of the effects of such seductive poetry! It probably surpasses in talent anything that you ever wrote. Tell me if you think seriously of completing this work, or if you have sketched the story. I am very sorry to have occasioned you the trouble of writing again the 'Letter of Julia'; but you are always very forgiving in such cases." The lines in which the objectionable words appeared were obliterated by Lord Byron.

From the following letter we see that Mr. Murray continued his remonstrances:—

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

May 3rd, 1819.

I find that 'Julia's Letter' has been safely received, and is with the printer. The whole remainder of the second canto will be sent by Friday's post. The inquiries after its appearance are not a few. Pray use your most tasteful discretion so as to wrap up or leave out certain approximations to indelicacy.

I am, my Lord, Your faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, who was entrusted with the business portion of this transaction, wrote to Mr. Murray:—

*Mr. Douglas Kinnaird to John Murray.*

June 7th, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR,

Since I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have received from Lord Byron a letter in which he expresses himself as having left to Mr. Hobhouse and myself the sole and whole discretion and duty of settling with the publisher of the MSS. which are now in your hands, the consideration

to be given for them. Observing that you have advertised 'Mazeppa,' I feel that it is my duty to request you will name an early day—of course previous to your publishing that or any other part of the MSS.—when we may meet and receive your offer of such terms as you may deem proper for the purchase of the copyright of them. The very liberal footing on which Lord Byron's intercourse with you in your character of publisher of his Lordship's works has hitherto been placed, leaves no doubt in my mind that our interview need be but very short, and that the terms you will propose will be met by our assent.

The parties met, and Mr. Murray agreed to give £525 for 'Mazeppa,' and £1575 for the first and second cantos of 'Don Juan,' with 'The Ode to Venice' thrown in. These terms were considered satisfactory, and Mr. Murray proceeded with the publication of the works. 'Mazeppa' came out first; and, being published with Lord Byron's name on the title-page, that "lively, spirited, and pleasant tale," as Gifford described it on the margin of the MS., proved exceedingly successful.

In accordance with Lord Byron's directions to his publisher to "keep the anonymous," Cantos I. and II. of 'Don Juan' appeared in London, in quarto, in July, 1819, without the name of either author, publisher, or bookseller. The book was immediately pounced upon by the critics; but it is unnecessary to quote their reviews, as they are impartially given in the latest accredited editions of Lord Byron's poems. We may, however, give a few of those less known, from Mr. Murray's intimate friends.

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

Ryde, July 1st, 1819.

"Lord B.'s letter is shockingly amusing.\* He must be mad; but then there's method in his madness. I dread.

\* Probably that written in May; printed in the 'Life.'

however, the end. He is, or rather might be, the most extraordinary character of his age. I have lived to see three great men—men to whom none come near in their respective provinces—Pitt, Nelson, Wellington. Morality and religion would have placed our friend among them as the fourth boast of the time ; even a decent respect for the good opinion of mankind might have done much now ; but all is tending to displace him.”

On ‘Don Juan’ being published, Gifford again wrote to Murray from Ryde :—

“How goes on, or rather how goes off, the Don ? I read the second canto this morning, and lost all patience at seeing so much beauty so wantonly and perversely disfigured. A little care, and a little wish to do right, would have made this a superlative thing. As it is, it is better than any other could have done ; but this is poor praise for Lord Byron. What a store of shame and sorrow is he laying up for himself ! I never much admired the vaunt of Draconianism, ‘And all this I dare do, because I dare,’ yet what but this is Lord Byron’s plea !”

Mr. Murray, who was still in communication with Mr. Blackwood, found that he refused to sell ‘Don Juan,’ because it contained personalities which he regarded as even more objectionable than those of which Murray had complained in the *Magazine*.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

July 21st, 1819.

“I received this morning by the coach 25 copies of ‘Don Juan,’ but without any letter to tell me who had sent them. I am sorry to say it is a book which I could not sell on any account whatever. I have therefore laid the copies aside till I receive directions whether I shall send them back, or deliver them to any one else. Had I not received a copy two days ago for the *Magazine*, I should probably not have had time to have looked at it, but have sold the copies to-day, without thinking about the matter. I hope you



will not blame me for what I have done. I need not say how happy on all accounts I should have been if I could have done otherwise. In the *Magazine* which I have sent you to-day, you will see a note at p. 483 with regard to 'Don Juan.' "

Miss Jane Waldie wrote to Mr. Murray: "Why will Lord Byron write what we may not read? The world says that you are the publisher of 'Don Juan,' though not nominally so. Is this true?" On the other hand, Lady Caroline Lamb informed Murray: "You cannot think how clever I think 'Don Juan' is, in my heart." The poem was severely criticised, but this only increased the public interest in it, and as it bore no name, and was therefore not copyright, it was republished in cheap editions by the pirates.

*Mr. John Barrow to John Murray.*

September 5th, 1819.

"What a tremendous attack on your friend Byron in *Blackwood!* If he has any feeling it must be daggers to him, but I believe he is callous to every feeling except such as we imagine demons to feel. The *Quarterly*, I suppose, however, will not touch him; or, if so, touch his graceful locks and blue eyes with great tenderness."

When the copyright of 'Don Juan' was infringed by other publishers, it became necessary to take steps to protect it at law, and Mr. Sharon Turner was consulted on the subject. An injunction was applied for in Chancery, and the course of the negotiation will be best ascertained from the following letters:—

*Mr. Sharon Turner to John Murray.*

October 21st, 1819.

DEAR MURRAY,

. . . On 'Don Juan' I have much apprehension. I had from the beginning, and therefore advised the separate

assignment. The counsel who is settling the bill also doubts if the Chancellor will sustain the injunction. I think, when Mr. Bell comes to town, it will be best to have a consultation with him on the subject. The counsel, Mr. Loraine, shall state to him his view on the subject, and you shall hear what Mr. Bell feels upon it. Shall I appoint the consultation? The evil, if not stopped, will be great. It will circulate in a cheap form very extensively, injuring society wherever it spreads. Yet one consideration strikes me. You could wish Lord Byron to write less objectionably. You may also wish him to return you part of the £1625. If the Chancellor should dissolve the injunction on this ground, that will show Lord B. that he must expect no more copyright money for such things, and that they are too bad for law to uphold. Will not this affect his mind and purify his pen? It is true that to get this good result you must encounter the risk and expense of the injunction and of the argument upon it. Will you do this? If I laid the case separately before three of our ablest counsel, and they concurred in as many opinions that it could not be supported, would this equally affect his Lordship's mind, and also induce him to return you an adequate proportion of the purchase money? Perhaps nothing but the Court treating him as it treated Southey\* may sufficiently impress Lord B. After the consultation with Bell you will better judge. Shall I get it appointed as soon as he comes to town?

Ever yours faithfully,

SHARON TURNER.

Mr. Bell gave his opinion that the Court would not afford protection to the book, which, however, he admitted that he had not had time to study.

The next letter relates to the opinion of Mr. Shadwell, afterwards Vice-Chancellor :—

\* In the case of Wat Tyler, see Murray's letter to Byron in preceding chapter, April 12th, 1817.

*Mr. Sharon Turner to John Murray.*

November 12th, 1819.

DEAR MURRAY,

I saw Mr. Shadwell to-day on 'Don Juan.' He has gone through the book with more attention than Mr. Bell had time to do. He desires me to say that he does not think the Chancellor would refuse an injunction, or would overturn it if obtained. He thinks that the passages are not of such a nature as to overturn the property of it. He has expressed to me his opinion so strongly on this point that I thought it right to mention it to you, because he is a very conscientious man. He says, "I cannot of course answer for the event, but it is my full belief that the passages will not prevent the Chancellor from suppressing the piracy." He says it should certainly be brought forward by yourself. Judge now for yourself. Shall I have a consultation between him and Horne on the subject, for you to attend? Horne is our first man now before the Chancellor. Or will you try it without this, or abandon it?

Yours most faithfully,

SHARON TURNER.

The last letter from Mr. Turner to Mr. Murray on the same subject was dated a few days after the above :—

*Mr. Turner to John Murray.*

DEAR MURRAY,

The truth about 'Don Juan' seems to be this. Shadwell, in settling the bill with Downer's name, went carefully through the poem. He afterwards took it with him to Westminster, and I think has expressed not only his own opinion, but that of some others at the Chancery bar; for he has apologised for not returning it to me, because S. had borrowed it. His decided tone that the Court will not let the copyright be invaded has much struck me, and the more because in the case of 'Wat Tyler' he told me that he thought that book could not be supported. His general opinions are also not favourable to Lord B., and his taste

is highly moral. Yet, though he disapproves of the passages, he is remarkably sanguine that they do not furnish sufficient ground for the Chancellor to dissolve the injunction. He says the passages are not more amatory than those of many books of which the copyright was never doubted. He added that one great tendency of the book was not an unfair one. It was to show in Don Juan's ultimate character the ill effect of that injudicious maternal education which Don Juan is represented as having received, and which had operated injuriously upon his mind. He repeated to me several times that, as far as it was possible to foresee an event, he could not doubt of this. You have now all that I have heard before you. My own opinion has been always that of doubt. Yet Shadwell's confidence makes me doubt my doubt. If I could, I would suppress it altogether in every form, but it can only do more mischief to let cheap editions be circulated.

Ever yours,

SHARON TURNER.

Whatever becomes of this, I think your idea of getting Lord B. to prune and replace highly laudable, provided he will do it effectually.

The injunction to restrain the publication of 'Don Juan' by piratical publishers was granted, but Lord Byron would not make any alterations in the poem as suggested by Mr. Murray. "With regard to the copyright, it is hard that you should pay for a nonentity. I will therefore refund it, which I can very well do, not having spent it, nor begun upon it; and so we shall be quits on that score." It was not, however, necessary for Murray to claim an abatement of the copyright money, as he was now enabled to sell the work as before. Lord Byron was not deterred by the outcry about 'Don Juan,' for he informed Mr. Murray that he was proceeding with the third canto, as well as with the 'Prophecy of Dante.'

Towards the end of 1819, Byron thought of returning

to England. On the 8th of November he wrote to Mr. Murray :—

“If she [the Countess Guiccioli] and her husband make it up, you will perhaps see me in England sooner than you expect. If not, I will retire with her to France or America, change my name, and lead a quiet provincial life. If she gets over this, and I get over my Tertian ague, I will perhaps look in at Albemarle Street *en passant* to Bolivar.”

When Mr. Hobhouse, then living at Ramsbury, heard of Byron's intention to go to South America, he wrote to Mr. Murray as follows :—

*Mr. Hobhouse to John Murray.*

November, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR,

I own my delay, but I have been absent from Ramsbury some days, and immersed in the miserable provincial politics of my brother moon-rakers of this county. I have to thank you for your former communication, and for this of to-day. To be sure it is impossible that Lord B. should seriously contemplate, or, if he does, he must not expect us to encourage, this mad scheme. I do not know what in the world to say, but presume some one has been talking nonsense to him. Let Jim Perry go to Venezuela if he will—he may edit his ‘Independent Gazette’ amongst the Independents themselves, and reproduce his stale puns and politics without let or hindrance. But our poet is too good for a planter—too good to sit down before a fire made of mare's legs, to a dinner of beef without salt and bread. It is the wildest of all his meditations—pray tell him. The plague and Yellow Jack, and famine and free quarter, besides a thousand other ills, will stare him in the face. No tooth-brushes, no corn-rubbers, no *Quarterly Reviews*. In short, plenty of all he abominates and nothing of all he loves. I shall write, but you can tell facts, which will be better than my arguments.

Very truly yours,

JOHN HOBHOUSE.

Byron's half-formed intention was soon abandoned, and the Countess Guiccioli's serious illness recalled him to Ravenna, where he remained for the next year and a half.

Hobhouse's next letter to Murray (Jan., 1820), in which he reported "Bad news from Ravenna—a great pity indeed;" it was dated *Newgate*, where he had been lodged in consequence of his pamphlet entitled 'A Trifling Mistake in Thomas Lord Erskine's Recent Pamphlet,' containing several very strong reflections on the House of Commons as then constituted. The matter was brought under the consideration of the House (10th Dec., 1819) by Mr. Stuart Wortley (afterwards Lord Wharncliffe), when the publication of the pamphlet was declared to be a breach of privilege, and Mr. Hobhouse, who had authorized the Right Hon. Edward Ellice to declare that he was the author, was committed to Newgate, where he remained until the dissolution of Parliament in the following February.

During his imprisonment, Mr. Hobhouse was visited by Mr. Murray and Ugo Foscolo, as well as by many of his political friends. After Mr. Murray's visit, the Countess of Bessborough (mother of Lady Caroline Lamb) wrote to him :—

*Countess of Bessborough to John Murray.*

"I hope your charitable visit to Newgate succeeded. I have scarcely seen Caroline to speak of since, so know nothing about it. Pray do not mention the Waldegrave manuscripts to Sir J. Mackintosh, or *any one*, till after my son, Col. Ponsonby, returns from Ireland when the elections are over. I think I can *almost* promise you that you shall have them, but as it still depends on some circumstances that cannot be quite settled until Frederick comes back, any mention of such a project beforehand might totally defeat the whole."

Lady Caroline Lamb also wrote to Mr. Murray from Brockett Hall, asking for information about Byron and Hobhouse.

*Lady Caroline Lamb to John Murray.*

You have never written to tell me about him. Now, did you know the pain and agony this has given me, you had not been so remiss. If you could come here on Wednesday for one night, I have a few people and a supper. You could come by the Mail in two hours, much swifter than even in your swift carriage; and I have one million of things to say and ask also. Do tell me how that dear Radical Hob is, and pray remember me to him. I really hope you will be here at dinner or supper on Wednesday. Your bedroom shall be ready, and you can be back in Town before most people are up, though I rise here at seven.

Yours quite disturbed my mind, for want of your telling me how he [Byron] looks, what he says, if he is grown fat, if he is no uglier than he used to be, if he is good-humoured or cross-grained, putting his brows down—if his hair curls or is straight as somebody said, if he has seen Hobhouse, if he is going to stay long, if you went to Dover as you intended, and a great deal more, which, if you had the smallest tact or aught else, you would have written long ago; for as to me, I shall certainly not see him, neither do I care he should know that I ever asked after him. It is from mere curiosity I should like to hear all you can tell me about him. Pray come here immediately.

Yours,

C. L.

Byron sent Murray from Ravenna (21st July, 1820) the third and fourth cantos of 'Don Juan.'

"Recollect," he said, "that these two cantos reckon as only one between you and me, being, in fact, the third canto cut into two, because I found it too long. . . . I have finished my translation of the 'Morgante Maggiore' of Pulci, which I will transcribe and send. . . . You

inquire after 'Dante's Prophecy.' I have not done more than six hundred lines, but will vaticinate at leisure." ['Dante's Prophecy' was finished by the 14th of March, and forwarded to Murray by post.] "When I have left more than one reading," Byron wrote, "which I have done often, you may adopt that which Gifford, Frere, Rose, Hobhouse, and others of your Utican Senate think the best or least bad." [He next forwarded the literal translation of the episode of Francesca of Rimini.] "So," he wrote to Murray, "you have put *your* name to 'Juan,' after all your panic and the row ; you are a rare fellow !"

During the summer months of 1820, Lord Byron proceeded with his tragedy of 'Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,' which was finished in July 1820, and published at the end of the year. It was produced on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre in the beginning of the following year, in spite of the poet's urgent and repeated remonstrances. It was a play, he observed, for the closet, and not for the theatre. Mr. Gifford, much to Byron's delight, pronounced it to be "English—genuine English." To Murray, Mr. Gifford wrote privately :—

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

"Lord Byron will have a pretty collection of dramas by-and-by. Let him proceed, he will do something at last. Never mind his plays not being stage-worthy ; in these times it signifies not much ; but he has the true dramatic turn, and fails only in his plots. If he could but get a little into the bustle of our old dramatists, absurd as it sometimes was, it would do ; otherwise he must die a martyr to his simplicity and singleness. . . . After all, he is a wonderful creature. If I had him, I would keep him very carefully, and show him only on high days and holidays."

Meanwhile, Byron proceeded with his fifth canto of 'Don Juan,' which, begun on October 16th, was finished on November 20th, 1820, that is, in little more than a month.



The third, fourth, and fifth cantos were published together at the end of 1821, still without the name of either author or publisher. There was quite a rush for the work. The booksellers' messengers filled the street in front of the house in Albemarle Street, and the parcels of books were given out of the window in answer to their obstreperous demands.

Notwithstanding this remarkable sale of 'Don Juan,' Murray hesitated about publishing any more of the cantos. After the fifth canto was published, Lord Byron informed Murray that it was "hardly the beginning of the work," that he intended to take Don Juan through the tour of Europe, put him through the Divorce Court, and make him finish as Anacharsis Cloots' in the French Revolution. Besides being influenced by his own feelings, it is possible that the following letter of Mr. Croker may have induced Mr. Murray to have nothing further to do with the work :—

*Mr. Croker to John Murray.*

Munster House, March 26th, 1820.

*A rainy Sunday.*

DEAR MURRAY,

I have to thank you for letting me see your two new cantos [the 3rd and 4th], which I return. What sublimity! what levity! what boldness! what tenderness! what majesty! what trifling! what variety! what *tediousness*!—for tedious to a strange degree, it must be confessed that whole passages are, particularly the earlier stanzas of the fourth canto. I know no man of such general powers of intellect as Brougham, yet I think *him* insufferably tedious; and I fancy the reason to be that he has such *facility* of expression that he is never recalled to a *selection* of his thoughts. A more costive orator would be obliged to choose, and a man of his talents could not fail to choose the best; but the power of uttering all and everything which passes across his mind, tempts him to say all. He goes on without thought—I should rather say, without pause.

His speeches are poor from their richness, and dull from their infinite variety. An impediment in his speech would make him a perfect Demosthenes. Something of the same kind, and with something of the same effect, is Lord Byron's wonderful fertility of thought and facility of expression; and the Protean style of 'Don Juan,' instead of checking (as the fetters of rhythm generally do) his natural activity, not only gives him wider limits to range in, but even generates a more roving disposition. I dare swear, if the truth were known, that his digressions and repetitions generate one another, and that the happy jingle of some of his comical rhymes has led him on to episodes of which he never originally thought; and thus it is that, with the most extraordinary merit, *merit of all kinds*, these two cantos have been to *me*, in several points, tedious and even obscure.

As to the PRINCIPLES, all the world, and you, Mr. Murray, *first of all*, have done this poem great injustice. There are levities here and there, more than good taste approves, but nothing to make such a terrible rout about—nothing so bad as 'Tom Jones,' nor within a hundred degrees of 'Count Fathom.' I know that it is no justification of one fault to produce a greater, neither am I justifying Lord Byron. I have acquaintance none, or next to none, with him, and of course no interest beyond what we must all take in a poet who, on the whole, is one of the first, if not the very first, of our age; but I direct my observations against you and those whom you deferred to. If you print and sell 'Tom Jones' and 'Peregrine Pickle,' why did you start at 'Don Juan'? Why smuggle it into the world and, as it were, pronounce it illegitimate in its birth, and induce so many of the learned rabble, when they could find so little specific offence in it, to refer to its supposed original state as one of original sin? If instead of this you had touched the right string and in the right place, Lord Byron's own good taste and good nature would have revised and corrected some phrases in his poem which in reality disparage it more than its imputed looseness of principle; I mean some expressions of political and personal feelings which, I believe, he, in fact, never felt, and threw in wantonly and *de gaieté de cœur*, and which he would have omitted, advisedly and *de bonté de cœur*, if he had not been goaded by indiscreet, contradictory, and urgent criticisms,

which, in some cases, were dark enough to be called *calumnies*. But these are blowing over, if not blown over ; and I cannot but think that if Mr. Gifford, or some friend in whose taste and disinterestedness Lord Byron could rely, were to point out to him the cruelty to individuals, the injury to the national character, the offence to public taste, and the injury to his own reputation, of such passages as those about Southey and Waterloo and the British Government and the head of that Government, I cannot but hope and believe that these blemishes in the first cantos would be wiped away in the next edition ; and that some that occur in the two cantos (which you sent me) would never see the light. What interest can Lord Byron have in being the poet of a party in politics, or of a party in morals, or of a party in religion ? Why should he wish to throw away the suffrages (you see the times infect my dialect) of more than half the nation ? He has no interest in that direction, and, I believe, has no feeling of that kind. In politics, he cannot be what he appears, or rather what Messrs. Hobhouse and Leigh Hunt wish to make him appear. A man of his birth, a man of his taste, a man of his talents, a man of his habits, can have nothing in common with such miserable creatures as we now call *Radicals*, of whom I know not that I can better express the illiterate and blind ignorance and vulgarity than by saying that the best informed of them have probably never heard of Lord Byron. No, no, Lord Byron may be indulgent to these jackal followers of his ; he may connive at their use of his name—nay, it is not to be denied that he has given them too, too much countenance—but he never can, I should think, now that he sees not only the road but the rate they are going, continue to take a part so contrary to all his own interests and feelings, and to the feelings and interests of all the respectable part of his country. And yet it was only yesterday at dinner that somebody said that he had read or seen a letter of Lord Byron's to somebody, saying that if the Radicals only made a little progress and showed some real force, he would hasten over and get on horseback to head them. This is evidently either a gross lie altogether, or a grosser misconstruction of some epistolary pleasantry ; because if the proposition were serious, the letter never would have been shown. Yet see how a bad name is given. We were twelve at dinner, all (except myself) people of

note, and yet (except Walter Scott and myself again) every human being will repeat the story to twelve others—and so on. But what is to be the end of all this rigmarole of mine? To conclude, this—to advise you, for your own sake as a tradesman, for Lord Byron's sake as a poet, for the sake of good literature and good principles, which ought to be united, to take such measures as you may be able to venture upon to get Lord Byron to revise these two cantos, and not to make another step in the odious path which Hobhouse beckons him to pursue. There is little, very little, of this offensive nature in these cantos; the omission, I think, of five stanzas out of 215, would do all I should ask on this point; but I confess that I think it would be much better for his fame and your profit if the two cantos were thrown into one, and brought to a proper length by the retrenchment of the many careless, obscure, and idle passages which *incuria fudit*. I think Tacitus says that the Germans formed their plans when drunk and matured them when sober. I know not how this might answer in public affairs, but in poetry I should think it an excellent plan—to pour out, as Lord Byron says, his whole mind in the intoxication of the moment, but to revise and condense in the sobriety of the morrow. One word more: experience shows that the Pulcian style is very easily written. Frere, Blackwood's Magaziners, Rose, Cornwall, all write it with ease and success; it therefore behoves Lord Byron to distinguish his use of this measure by superior and peculiar beauties. He should refine and polish; and by the *limæ labor et mora*, attain the perfection of ease. A vulgar epigram says that "*easy writing is damned hard reading*;" and it is one of the eternal and general rules by which heaven warns us, at every step and at every look, that this is a mere transitory life; that what costs no trouble soon perishes; that what grows freely dies early; and that nothing endures but in some degree of proportion with the time and labour it has cost to create. Use these hints if you can, but not my name.

Yours ever,

J. W. CROKER.

But Byron would alter nothing more in his 'Don Juan.' He accepted the corrections of Gifford in his 'Tragedies,'

but ‘Don Juan’ was never submitted to him. Hobhouse was occasionally applied to, because he knew Lord Byron’s handwriting; but even his suggestions of alterations or corrections of ‘Don Juan’ were in most cases declined, and moreover about this time a slight coolness had sprung up between him and Byron. When Hobhouse was standing for Westminster with Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Byron sent a song about him in a letter to Mr. Murray. It ran to the tune of ‘My Boy Tammy? O!’

“Who are now the People’s men?  
 My boy Hobby O!  
 Yourself and Burdett, Gentlemen,  
 And Blackguard Hunt and Cobby O!

“When to the mob you make a speech.  
 My boy Hobby O!  
 How do you keep without their reach  
 The watch within your fobby ‘O?’” \*

Lord Byron asked Murray to show the song not only to some of his friends—who got it by heart and had it printed in the newspapers—but also to Hobhouse himself. “I know,” said his Lordship, “that he will never forgive me, but I really have no patience with him for letting himself be put in quod by such a set of ragamuffins.” Mr. Hobhouse, however, was angry with Byron for his lampoon and with Murray for showing it to his friends. He accordingly wrote the following letter, which contains some interesting particulars of the Whig Club at Cambridge in Byron’s University days:—

*Mr. Hobhouse to John Murray.*

2, Hanover Square, November, 1820.

I have received your letter, and return to you Lord Byron’s. I shall tell you very frankly, because I think it

\* The rest of the song is printed in *Murray’s Magazine*, No. 3.  
 VOL. I. 2 E

much better to speak a little of a man to his face than to say a great deal about him behind his back, that I think you have not treated me as I deserved, nor as might have been expected from that friendly intercourse which has subsisted between us for so many years. Had Lord Byron transmitted to me a lampoon on you, I should, if I know myself at all, either have put it into the fire without delivery, or should have sent it at once to you. I should not have given it a circulation for the gratification of all the small wits at the great and little houses, where no treat is so agreeable as to find a man laughing at his friend. In this case, the whole coterie of the very shabbiest party that ever disgraced and divided a nation—I mean the Whigs—are, I know, chuckling over that silly charge made by Mr. Lamb on the hustings, and now confirmed by Lord Byron, of my having belonged to a Whig club at Cambridge. Such a Whig as I then was, I am now. I had no notion that the name implied selfishness and subserviency, and desertion of the most important principles for the sake of the least important interest. I had no notion that it implied anything more than an attachment to the principles the ascendancy of which expelled the Stuarts from the Throne. Lord Byron belonged to this Cambridge club, and desired me to scratch out his name, on account of the criticism in the *Edinburgh Review* on his early poems; but, exercising my discretion on the subject, I did not erase his name, but reconciled him to the said Whigs.

The members of the club were but few, and with those who have any marked politics amongst them, I continue to agree at this day. They were but ten, and you must know most of them—Mr. W. Ponsonby, Mr. George O'Callaghan, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Dominick Browne, Mr. Henry Pearce, Mr. Kinnaird, Lord Tavistock, Lord Ellenborough, Lord Byron, and myself. I was not, as Lord Byron says in the song, the founder of this club;\* on the contrary, thinking myself of mighty importance in those days, I recollect very well that some difficulty attended my consenting to belong to the club, and I have by me a letter from Lord Tavistock, in which the

\* "But when we at Cambridge were  
My boy Hobbie O!  
If my memory do not err,  
You founded a Whig Clubbie O!"

distinction between being a Whig *party* man and a Revolution Whig is strongly insisted upon.

I have troubled you with this detail in consequence of Lord Byron's charge, which he, who despises and defies, and has lampooned the Whigs all round, only invented out of wantonness, and for the sake of annoying me—and he has certainly succeeded, thanks to your circulating this filthy ballad. As for his Lordship's vulgar notions about the *mob*, they are very fit for the Poet of the *Morning Post*, and for nobody else. Nothing in the ballad annoyed me but the charge about the Cambridge club, because nothing else had the semblance of truth; and I own it has hurt me very much to find Lord Byron playing into the hands of the Holland House sycophants, for whom he has himself the most sovereign contempt, and whom in other days I myself have tried to induce him to tolerate.

I shall say no more on this unpleasant subject except that, by a letter which I have just received from Lord Byron, I think he is ashamed of his song. I shall certainly speak as plainly to him as I have taken the liberty to do to you on this matter. He was very wanton and you very indiscreet; but I trust neither one nor the other meant mischief, and there's an end of it. Do not aggravate matters by telling how much I have been annoyed. Lord Byron has sent me a list of his new poems and some prose, all of which he requests me to prepare for the press for him. The monied arrangement is to be made by Mr. Kinnaird. When you are ready for me, the materials may be sent to me at this place, where I have taken up my abode for the season.

I remain, very truly yours,

JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE.

Towards the end of 1820, Lord Byron wrote a long letter to Mr. Murray on Mr. Bowles's strictures on the 'Life and Writings of Pope.' It was a subject perhaps unworthy of his pen, but being an ardent admirer of Pope, he thought it his duty to "bowl him [Bowles] down." "I mean to lay about me," said Byron, "like a dragon, till I make manure of Bowles for the top of Parnassus."

Murray submitted Lord Byron's letter in defence of Pope to his friend Gifford, who cut out a good deal of it before publication.

"It will be unsafe," he said, "to publish it as it stands. The letter is not very refined, but it is vigorous and to the purpose. Bowles requires checking. I hope, however, that Lord B. will not continue to squander himself thus. When will he resume his majestic march, and shake the earth again?"

After some revision, the first and second letters to Bowles were published, and were well received.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

March 20th, 1821.

DEAR LORD BYRON,

The pamphlet on Bowles is deemed excellent, and is to be published on Saturday; the note on Lady M. W. Montagu, though also very good, Mr. Gifford recommends to be suppressed. The letter about the Hellespont will appear in the next *London Magazine*. The fatal death of its late editor, poor Scott, in a duel, you will have read of; he has left a widow, a very superior woman and two infant children, with a shilling; and a committee, of which Sir James Mackintosh is the head and your humble servant the tail, are endeavouring to form a subscription for them, and if you please I shall be glad to put your name down for £10.

The 'Doge of Venice' will now come out, with the 'Prophecy of Dante,' at a most happy time, when we are just now interested for Italy; nothing could be better; it is nearly worked off, and will be out next week.

I long to know what you propose to do; will these wars, of which our lives may not see the end, for all Europe will mingle indiscriminately,—will they bring you to England, or will Lady Noel's death, which they tell me from good authority must immediately take place, do so?

By the way, Hobhouse spoke to Lord Grey about the impropriety of allowing a play, not intended for performance, to be acted on the stage. Earl Grey spoke to



the Lord Chancellor, who said that he would grant an injunction.

We as yet can get no certain news from Italy.

I am, my Lord,

Your faithful servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Mr. Hobhouse also had a grievance against Mr. Bowles. To Mr. Murray he wrote :—

*Mr. Hobhouse to John Murray.*

May, 1821.

I hear Parson Bowles goes about abusing me, relying on my forbearance, or on what he may think his vast capacity for satire. The dirty dog crouches and creeps to Lord Byron, but thinks he may safely attack me. He may find himself mistaken one day or the other. In the meantime, as he is fond of parody, he may have something in that shape which you will find overleaf.

“Should Parson Bowles yourself or friend compare  
To some French cut-throat, if you please, Santerre—  
Or heap, malignant, on your living head  
The smut and trash he pour'd on Pope when dead,  
Say what reply—or how with him to deal—  
Sot without shame and fool that cannot feel?  
You would not parley with a printers' hack—  
You cannot cane him, for his coat is black ;  
Reproof and chastisement are idly spent  
On one who calls a kick a compliment.  
Unwhipp'd, then, leave him to lampoon and lie,  
Safe in his parson's guise and infamy.”

Truly yours,

JOHN C. HOBHOUSE.

The tragedy of ‘Sardanapalus,’ the last three acts of which had been written in a fortnight, was despatched to Murray, on the 30th of May, 1821, and was within a few

weeks followed by 'The Two Foscari: an Historical Tragedy'—which had been composed within a month—and on the 10th of September by 'Cain, a Mystery.' This immense quantity of literary work accomplished in so short a time, showed that Byron was in full writing power. All these dramas were written at Ravenna. "I am mortified," wrote Byron to Murray (Sept. 20th, 1821), "that Gifford don't take to my new dramas . . . I regret his demur the more that he has been always my grand patron, and I know no praise which would compensate me in my own mind for his censure."

What Gifford said of Lord Byron's works may best be shown by two extracts from his letters to Murray. The first relates to the new cantos of 'Don Juan,' which appeared in August, 1821; the second to the tragedy of 'The Two Foscari.'

*Mr. Gifford to John Murray.*

August 7th, 1821.

"What can Lord Byron propose to himself by forcing the publication of these cantos? They will not add to his fame, and this is what he should now take care of. Our friend Sir Walter makes an occasional sacrifice, but then he has a powerful motive; and besides, though he may play with his talents, he never trifles with his character. I could say more, but, alas! *cui bono?*"

August 15th, 1821.

"I knew Lord Byron would not be satisfied unless he saw himself in print. He *must* occupy the public eye, and all that his friends have to lament is that his taste of fame is so indiscriminate. I have often heard Lord Grosvenor say, when a young man, that he did not know the difference between boiled beef and a delicate loin of veal. Lord Byron's case is worse."

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

Cheltenham, August 12, 1821.

I have this day received your most obliging letter, with a packet inclosing notes for 'Sardanapalus' and the 'Foscari,' which go immediately to the printer. As you so particularly desire the immediate publication of these two tragedies it shall be done. At present Drury Lane Theatre, the most ravenous, is opened for the summer season, and therefore I presume that I am acting according to the spirit of your wishes, in having the plays ready to put forth as soon as both theatres are closed. I told you in my last what Mr. G. had said privately to me about 'Sardanapalus.' The two first acts of the 'Foscari' he thinks have more life than the first *Doge*. Mr. Gifford is at Ramsgate, but it is doing him no good, and I begin to entertain serious apprehensions about him, and how I am to supply his place I know not; in all my range of literary acquaintances there is not one that is the least like him in the union of so many and such variety of qualifications.

I had the good fortune to sit by Sir W. Scott in the Hall during the Coronation—a sight which I would not have missed for anything—and he declared it had infinitely surpassed all that he could have conceived possible. Scott never ceases to talk of you with the most firm regard.

I am here for a month on account of my wife's health, which has been precarious since her late severe and dangerous illness.

I suspect Drury Lane will not close, as it has within these ten days only presented a most superb imitation of the Coronation, at a most enormous expense, and it will require a month to repay them. And the Queen's death, too, interfered, and everybody has escaped from town. Copleston is here and Professor Monk.

I remain, dear Lord Byron,

Your grateful and faithful servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

Cheltenham, September 6th, 1821.

I am much delighted by your Lordship's kind letter of the 16th of August, which allows me to hope that your rage against me [because of mistakes of the printer] has abated. The same post brings me a letter from Town, in answer to my constant inquiries after the bust : "The busts of Lord B. are arrived ; the ship is now under quarantine ; I enclose an order for their delivery for you to sign ;" so that I expect to find them on my return. It is curious that, after waiting for this bust for years, it should at length arrive in the same week with one of Sir Walter Scott\* (a very fine cast), which Chantrey has obligingly presented to me.

Don't be offended with Holmes ;† you were of great essential service in putting him in the way to make a livelihood ; but it is very long before, in his profession, he can gain one. If you wanted me to come out to you it would be very different. Neither be afraid of our Funds‡ breaking. When they go, there will be so many on the highway that a noble freebooter will have a bad chance. I bet sixpence they will last our time. I will send your thanks to James Smith,§ who will be much pleased.

Many persons besides you have at first supposed that I was the person of the same name connected with the Constitutional Association, but without consideration ; for on what occasion have I identified myself with a party ? My connexions are, I believe, even more numerous amongst the Whigs than the Tories. Indeed the Whigs have nearly driven away the Tories from my house ; and Jeffrey said, "If you wish to meet the most respectable of the Whigs, you must be introduced to Mr. Murray's room."

You hint that I am a little ungrateful to you, I think ;

\* Scott had been made a baronet in April. 1820.

† The miniature-painter who had been summoned to Venice by Byron.

‡ About this time Lord Byron was—or constantly professed himself to be—in great anxiety concerning the Public Funds, in which some of the proceeds of the sale of Newstead were invested.

§ Joint author of the 'Rejected Addresses.'

but, upon my soul, you will find my occasional apparent inattention arises from no causes but constitutional indolence, and now distraction from having so many correspondents and such incessant interruption to my writing to them. But in essentials I trust you can never find me wanting.

I forgot in my former letter to notice a hint in yours respecting an additional sum to Mr. Moore. The purchase which I have made of the 'Memoirs' is perfectly *con amore*. As a matter of mere business, if I placed the £2000 in the funds (supposing they did not break), in fourteen years (the least annuity value of the author's life) it would become £4000. Moore should not show the 'Memoirs' to any one now, I think.

Gifford always mentions you with unabated regard, as do Scott, Rose, and many more. Heber (Richard) has succeeded in his long desired election for Oxford. The Jerseys have gone abroad to resuscitate. I have sent the 'Blue Stockings'\* to amuse Mr. G., and it shall be forwarded in proof on my return. If you had the *local* knowledge it would become an excellent work. Accept my very kindest compliments, and be assured that I always am, dearest Lord Byron,

Your Lordship's faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

The three dramas, 'Sardanapalus,' 'The Two Foscari,' and 'Cain, a Mystery,' were published together in December, 1821, and Mr. Murray paid Lord Byron for them the sum of £2710. 'Cain' gave rise to much controversy, while 'Sardanapalus' was especially admired; Mr. Hobhouse wrote that it interested him very deeply, though it might be thought fantastical and unnatural by some.

*Mr. Hobhouse to John Murray.*

Ramsbury Manor, Hungerford, October 22nd, 1821.

"After all," he continued, "if it be not presumptuous in me to say so, I should venture to assert that tragedy-

\* The Blues which appeared in the *Liberal*.

writing is not Lord Byron's forte ; that is to say, that it will not turn out to be the best thing that he can do. According to my poor way of thinking, the 'Corsair' and the Fourth Canto [of 'Childe Harold'] will always bear away the palm.

"Lord Byron asks me if you have shown his 'Cain' to me. If you can get a heavy frank, do send it down here. I should like to read it. He tells me he has requested you to enclose no more criticisms, as they annoy instead of improving him, and, as he says, 'take off his attention, which may be better employed than in listening either to libels or flattery.' I know what he means well enough, and I dare say you do. The injunction, however, will save you some trouble."

On the appearance of 'Cain' it was reprinted in a cheap form by two booksellers, under the impression that the Court of Chancery would not protect it, and it therefore became necessary to take out an injunction to restrain these piratical publishers. The tragedy was, moreover, unmercifully handled in most of the critical journals, and was made the subject of a separate essay, entitled 'A Remonstrance addressed to Mr. Murray respecting a recent publication ; by Oxoniensis.' This contained a violent attack on "the obsolete trash, the very offscourings of Bayle and Voltaire, which your noble employer has made you pay for as though it were first-rate poetry and sound metaphysics."

And yet 'Cain' was a masterly work, dedicated, by his consent, to Sir Walter Scott, who, in writing to Mr. Murray, described it as "a very grand and tremendous drama."

*Sir W. Scott to John Murray.*

"I do not know that his Muse has ever taken so lofty a flight amid her former soarings. He has certainly matched Milton on his own ground. Some part of the language is bold, and may shock one class of readers,

whose line will be adopted by others out of affectation or envy. But then they must condemn 'Paradise Lost' if they have a mind to be consistent. The fiend-like reasoning and bold blasphemy of the fiend and of his pupil lead exactly to the point which was to be expected—the commission of the first murder and the ruin and despair of the perpetrator. . . . The great key to the mystery is, perhaps, the imperfection of our own faculties, which see and feel strongly the partial evils which press upon us, but know too little of the general system of the universe to be aware how the existence of this is to be reconciled with the benevolence of the great Creator."

When Lord Byron heard of the violent attack on Mr. Murray by Oxoniensis, he wrote to him :—

*Lord Byron to John Murray.*

Pisa, February 8th, 1822.

"How, or in what manner, *you* can be considered responsible for what *I* publish, I am at a loss to conceive. If 'Cain' be blasphemous, 'Paradise Lost' is blasphemous; and the very words of the Oxford gentleman, 'Evil, be thou my good,' are from that very poem, from the mouth of Satan; and is there anything more in that of Lucifer in the Mystery? 'Cain' is nothing more than a drama, not a piece of argument. . . . The attempt to *bully you*, because they think it won't succeed with me, seems to me as atrocious an attempt as ever disgraced the times. What! when Gibbon's, Hume's, Priestley's, and Drummond's publishers have been allowed to rest in peace for seventy years, are you to be singled out for a work of *fiction*, not of history or argument? There must be something at the bottom of this—some private enemy of your own; it is otherwise incredible. I can only say, 'Me, me; adsum qui feci'; that any proceeding directed against you, I beg, may be transferred to me, who am willing, and *ought*, to endure them all; that if you have lost money by the publication, I will refund any or all of the copyright; that I desire you will say that both *you* and *Mr. Gifford* remonstrated against the publication, as also Mr. Hobhouse; that I alone am the person who, either legally or otherwise, should bear the burden. If they prosecute, I will

come to England—that is, if by meeting it in my own person I can save yours. Let me know. You shan't suffer for me if I can help it. Make any use of this letter you please.'

Mr. Murray took an early opportunity of consulting Mr. Sharon Turner on the subject of 'Cain.' The result was the application of Mr. Shadwell to Lord Eldon, then Chancellor, for an injunction to protect Mr. Murray's property in Lord Byron's 'Cain.' Mr. Turner reported to Mr. Murray the result of his first interview with counsel:—

*Mr. Sharon Turner to John Murray.*

January 31st, 1822.

"Mr. Shadwell, whom I have just seen, has told me that he had read 'Cain' some time ago,—that he thinks it contains nothing but what a bookseller can be fairly justified in publishing, that it is not worse than many parts in 'Paradise Regained' and in 'Paradise Lost.' It is a dramatic exhibition of Lucifer speaking as Lucifer—often very absurdly. . . . He is King's Counsel and a religious man. He thinks it can hurt no reasonable mind. He will lead the case. If you do not apply, nothing is so likely to provoke a society to an indictment as letting these men go on in their piracy."

The case came before Lord Chancellor Eldon on the 9th of February. Mr. Shadwell, Mr. Spence, and Sergeant Copley were retained by Mr. Murray, and after considerable discussion the injunction was refused, the Lord Chancellor intimating that the publisher must establish his right to the publication at law, and obtain the decision of a jury, on which he would grant the injunction required. This was done accordingly, and the copyright in 'Cain' was thus secured.

During Lord Byron's residence at Pisa, Mr. Murray's half-brother Archibald, an officer in H.M.S. *Rochfort*,



lying off Leghorn, resolved on visiting him. The following is his account, written to his wife, then at Naples :—

*Mr. Archibald Murray, R.N., to Mrs. A. Murray.*

August 31st, 1822.

“We arrived at Pisa yesterday, and stopped there for the night on my account, that I might see if Lord Byron, who is still there, was accessible. I sent him a note, to which a very civil answer was immediately returned ; but without waiting for an answer, I proceeded to his mansion soon after my note, sent up my card, and was at once admitted, which was the more civil as I have now reason to believe that I called at an unseasonable hour, and was not expected, he having written to appoint another. However, as soon as his Lordship had apparelled (for I could perceive that my card had found him *en déshabille*) he received me, and was very courteous, agreeable, and gay. I was with him about an hour, and on parting had his permission, not only graciously but cordially (as I thought), to repeat my visit on returning to Pisa. He seemed in good spirits, and careless of the evil reports against his works.”

September 16th.

“At my return to Pisa the noble poet granted me another interview. He conversed with me quite familiarly, speaking very freely about himself, his political sentiments, his writings, and my brother. But you must have patience and wait till we meet to know what he said on those subjects, for I cannot impart them at present.

“My Lord Byron is not tall, but of moderate stature. He is rather stout than thin. He is considered handsome. I have heard him called very handsome, and he certainly has very comely features ; but his countenance is not on the Roman or Grecian model of elegance. It is round and full, and might be less agreeable in a different person. The emotions of his poetical spirit animate and beautify his face. His eye has the expression of a man of genius. He wears his hair rather longer than is the present custom for gentlemen, though in him it is not displeasing. It is just long enough to curl gracefully. The defect in one of his feet is so well concealed by his dress that it is not

observable when he sits or stands. The portrait prefixed to his works resembles him very well ; and a statue of him which I saw at Florence is also a very good likeness. It is a bust intended for John Murray. I am not so well able to give a description of his person as another might be, because I approached him both times with some commotion, and because, in both my interviews, my ears were far more greedy than my eyes. I was much more intent upon his conversation than his person—more anxious to penetrate his character than to scrutinize his form.

On the death of Allegra, Lord Byron entrusted to Mr. Murray the painful duty of making arrangements for the burial of the remains in Harrow Church. Mr. Cunningham, the clergyman of Harrow, wrote in answer to Mr. Murray :—

*Rev. J. W. Cunningham to John Murray.*

August 20th, 1822.

SIR,

Mr. Henry Drury was so good as to communicate to me a request conveyed to you by Lord Byron respecting the burial of a child in this church. Mr. H. Drury will probably have also stated to you my willingness to comply with the wish of Lord Byron. Will you forgive me, however, for so far trespassing upon you (though a stranger) as to suggest an inquiry whether it might not be practicable and desirable to fulfil for the *present* only a *part* of his Lordship's wish—by burying the child, and putting up a tablet with simply its name upon the tablet ; and thus leaving Lord B. more leisure to reflect upon the character of the inscription he may wish to be added. It does seem to me that whatever he may wish in the moment of his distress about the loss of this child, he will afterwards regret that he should have taken pains to proclaim to the world what he will not, I am sure, consider as honourable to his name. And if this be probable, then it appears to me the office of a true friend not to suffer him to commit himself but to allow his mind an opportunity of calm deliberation. I feel constrained to say that the inscription he proposed will be felt by every man of

refined taste, to say nothing of sound morals, to be an offence against taste and propriety. My correspondence with his Lordship has been so small that I can scarcely venture myself to urge these objections. You perhaps will feel no such scruple. I have seen no person who did not concur in the propriety of stating them. I would entreat, however, that should you think it right to introduce my name into any statement made to Lord Byron, you will not do it without assuring him of my unwillingness to oppose the smallest obstacle to his wishes, or give the slightest pain to his mind. The injury which, in my judgment, he is from day to day inflicting upon society is no justification for measures of retaliation and unkindness.

Your obedient and faithful Servant,

J. W. CUNNINGHAM.

No communication having been received by the Rector, he placed the application from Lord Byron before the churchwardens.

*Rev. J. W. Cunningham to John Murray.*

"The churchwardens have been urged to issue their prohibition by several leading and influential persons, laymen, in the parish. You are aware that as to *ex-parishioners* the consent of the churchwardens is no less necessary than my own; and that therefore the enclosed prohibition is decisive as to the putting up of the monument. You will oblige me by making known to Lord Byron the precise circumstances of the case.

I am, your obedient Servant,

J. W. CUNNINGHAM.

The prohibition was as follows :—

Harrow, September 17th, 1822.

HONOURED SIR,

I object on behalf of the parish to admit the tablet of Lord Byron's child into the church.

JAMES WINKLEY, *Churchwarden.*

The remains of Allegra, after long delay, were at length buried in the church, just under the present door mat, over which the congregation enter the church ; but no memorial tablet or other record of Allegra appears on the walls of Harrow Church.

## CHAPTER XVII.

BYRON'S DEATH AND THE DESTRUCTION OF HIS  
MEMOIRS.

IN any work dealing with a large number of transactions, which, though carried on concurrently, are allied to one another by nothing save their accidental association with one individual, the difficulties of maintaining the even, consecutive current of the narrative are obviously so great as to be almost insurmountable.

In these volumes it has been found impossible to present a strictly chronological record of Mr. Murray's life, and we have endeavoured so to group his correspondence as to lay before our readers the various episodes which go to form the business life of a publisher. In pursuance of this plan we now proceed to narrate the closing incidents of his friendship with Lord Byron, reserving to subsequent chapters the various other transactions in which he was engaged.

During the later months of Byron's residence in Italy this friendship had suffered some interruption, due in part perhaps to questions which had arisen out of the publication of 'Don Juan,' and in part to the interference of the Hunts. With the activity aroused by his expedition to Greece, Byron's better nature reasserted itself, and his last letter to his publisher, though already printed in Moore's Life, cannot be omitted from these pages :—

*Lord Byron to John Murray.*

Missolonghi, February 25th, 1824.

I have heard from Mr. Douglas Kinnaird that you state "a report of a satire on Mr. Gifford having arrived from Italy, *said* to be written by *me*! but that *you* do not believe it." I dare say you do not, nor any body else, I should think. Whoever asserts that I am the author or abettor of anything of the kind on Gifford lies in his throat. I always regarded him as my literary father, and myself as his prodigal son; if any such composition exists, it is none of mine. *You* know as well as anybody upon *whom* I have or have not written; and *you* also know whether they do or did not deserve that same. And so much for such matters.

You will perhaps be anxious to hear some news from this part of Greece (which is the most liable to invasion); but you will hear enough through public and private channels. I will, however, give you the events of a week, mingling my own private peculiar with the public; for we are here jumbled a little together at present.

On Sunday (the 15th, I believe) I had a strong and sudden convulsive attack, which left me speechless, though not motionless—for some strong men could not hold me; but whether it was epilepsy, catalepsy, cachexy, or apoplexy, or what other *ery* or *epsy*, the doctors have not decided; or whether it was spasmodic or nervous, &c.; but it was very unpleasant, and nearly carried me off, and all that. On Monday, they put leeches to my temples, no difficult matter, but the blood could not be stopped till eleven at night (they had gone too near the temporal artery for my temporal safety), and neither styptic nor caustic would cauterise the orifice till after a hundred attempts.

On Tuesday a Turkish brig of war ran on shore. On Wednesday, great preparations being made to attack her, though protected by her consorts, the Turks burned her and retired to Patras. On Thursday a quarrel ensued between the Suliotes and the Frank guard at the arsenal: a Swedish officer was killed, and a Suliote severely wounded, and a general fight expected, and with some difficulty prevented. On Friday, the officer was buried; and Captain Parry's English artificers mutinied, under pretence that

their lives were in danger, and are for quitting the country :—they may.

On Saturday we had the smartest shock of an earthquake which I remember (and I have felt thirty, slight or smart, at different periods ; they are common in the Mediterranean), and the whole army discharged their arms, upon the same principle that savages beat drums, or howl, during an eclipse of the moon :—it was a rare scene altogether—if you had but seen the English Johnnies, who had never been out of a cockney workshop before !—or will again, if they can help it—and on Sunday, we heard that the Vizier is come down to Larissa, with one hundred and odd thousand men.

In coming here, I had two escapes ; one from the Turks (*one* of my vessels was taken but afterwards released), and the other from shipwreck. We drove twice on the rocks near the Scrofes (islands near the coast).

I have obtained from the Greeks the release of eight-and-twenty Turkish prisoners, men, women, and children, and sent them to Patras and Prevesa at my own charges. One little girl of nine years old, who prefers remaining with me, I shall (if I live) send, with her mother, probably, to Italy, or to England, and adopt her. Her name is Hato, or Hatagée. She is a very pretty lively child. All her brothers were killed by the Greeks, and she herself and her mother merely spared by special favour and owing to her extreme youth, she being then but five or six years old.

My health is now better, and I ride about again. My office here is no sinecure, so many parties and difficulties of every kind ; but I will do what I can. Prince Mavrocordato is an excellent person, and does all in his power ; but his situation is perplexing in the extreme. Still we have great hopes of the success of the contest. You will hear, however, more of public news from plenty of quarters : for I have little time to write.

Believe me, yours, &c. &c.,

N. BN.

The fierce lawlessness of the Suliotes had now risen to such a height that it became necessary, for the safety of the European population, to get rid of them altogether ;

and, by some sacrifices on the part of Lord Byron, this object was at length effected. The advance of a month's pay by him, and the discharge of their arrears by the Government (the latter, too, with money lent for that purpose by the same universal paymaster), at length induced these rude warriors to depart from the town, and with them vanished all hopes of the expedition against Lepanto.

Byron died at Missolonghi on April 19th, 1824, and when the body arrived in London, Murray, on behalf of Mr. Hobhouse, who was not personally acquainted with Dr. Ireland, the Dean of Westminster, wrote to him, conveying "the request of the executors and nearest relatives of the deceased for permission that his Lordship's remains may be deposited in Westminster Abbey, in the most private manner, at an early hour in the morning."

*Dr. Ireland to John Murray.*

Islip. Oxford, July 8th, 1824.

DEAR SIR,

No doubt the family vault is the most proper place for the remains of Lord Byron. It is to be wished, however, that nothing had been said *publicly* about Westminster Abbey before it was known whether the remains could be received there. In the newspapers, unfortunately, it has been proclaimed by somebody that the Abbey was to be the spot, and, on the appearance of this article, I have been questioned as to the truth of it from Oxford. My answer has been that the proposal has been made, but civilly declined. I had also informed the members of the church at Westminster (after your first letter) that I could not grant the favour asked. I cannot, therefore, answer now that the case will not be mentioned (as it has happened) by some person or other who knows it. The best thing to be done, however, by the executors and relatives, is to carry away the body, and say as little about it as possible. Unless



the subject is provoked by some injudicious parade about the remains, perhaps the matter will draw little or no notice.

Yours very truly,

J. IRELAND.

The funeral took place at Hucknall Torkard Church, near Newstead, on July 16. The allusion in the following letter is to the remarkable incident of Lady Caroline Lamb accidentally meeting the funeral procession on its way down from London to Nottinghamshire.

Lady Caroline Lamb was so ill at this time that her letter was written by an amanuensis.

*Lady Caroline Lamb to John Murray.*

Brocket Hall, July 13th, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been more ill than I can express, or I should have written to you. I wish I could see you. It is surprising to me that I have not heard from Hobhouse. Will you write and tell me every particular of what has passed since I saw you? Lord Byron's hearse came by our gates yesterday. You may judge what I felt. Tell Hobhouse to see about my pictures, and letters and drawings. I will do anything he wishes about Lord Byron's letters. I am in no anxiety about my own; only you know that they were the most imprudent possible, and, for others' sakes, it were best to have them destroyed. There are two or three of Lord Byron's letters to me I should like to keep; all the rest Hobhouse may have. I wish to see Fletcher—is it possible? You may show this letter to Mrs. Leigh or Lady Byron, and tell them I am too ill to write myself. Lord Byron's death has made an impression on me which I cannot express. I am very sorry I ever said one unkind word against him. I am sure, if you knew how ill I have been, and am, you would come down and see me, for I have a great deal to say which I cannot write.

This mention of the Byron letters requires some explanation. Several years before, with a view to the Memoirs, Lord Byron had directed Mr. Moore, through Mr. Murray, to make inquiries as to some of his letters to Lady Caroline Lamb, Lady Cowper, Mr. Long, Mrs. Chaworth, and others. Lord Byron added :—

*Lord Byron to John Murray.*

September 28th, 1822.

“*If, by your own management, you can extract any of my epistles from Lady Caroline Lamb, they might be of use in your collection (sinking, of course, the names and all such circumstances as might hurt living feelings, or those of survivors) ; they treat of more topics than love occasionally.*”

The death of Byron brought into immediate prominence the question of his autobiographical memoirs, the MS. of which he had given to Moore, who was at that time his guest at La Mira, near Venice, in 1819.

“A short time before dinner,” wrote Moore, “he left the room, and in a minute or two returned carrying in his hand a white-leather bag. ‘Look here,’ he said, holding it up, ‘this would be worth something to Murray, though *you*, I daresay, would not give sixpence for it.’ ‘What is it?’ I asked. ‘My Life and Adventures,’ he answered. On hearing this I raised my hands in a gesture of wonder. ‘It is not a thing,’ he continued, ‘that can be published during my lifetime, but you may have it if you like : there, do whatever you please with it.’”

Moore was greatly gratified by the gift, and said the Memoirs would make a fine legacy for his little boy. Lord Byron informed Mr. Murray by letter what he had done. “They are not,” he said, “for publication during my life, but when I am cold you may do what you please.” In a subsequent letter to Mr. Murray, Lord Byron said : “As you say

my *prose* is good, why don't you treat with Moore for the reversion of my Memoirs?—conditionally, recollect; not to be published before decease. He has the permission to dispose of them, and I advised him to do so." Moore thus mentions the subject in his Memoirs:—

"*May 28th*, 1820.—Received a letter at last from Lord Byron, through Murray, telling me he had informed Lady B. of his having given me his Memoirs for the purpose of their being published after his death, and offering her the perusal of them in case she might wish to confute any of his statements. Her note in answer to this offer (the original of which he enclosed me) is as follows:—"—

Kirkby Mallory, March 10th, 1820.

I received your letter of January 1st, offering for my perusal a Memoir of part of my life. I decline to inspect it. I consider the publication or circulation of such a composition at any time is prejudicial to Ada's future happiness. For my own sake I have no reason to shrink from publication; but notwithstanding the injuries which I have suffered, I should lament more of the *consequences*.

A. BYRON.

TO LORD BYRON.\*

Moore received the continuation of Lord Byron's 'Memoirs' on the 26th of December, 1820, the postage amounting to forty-six francs and a half. "He advises me," said Moore in his Diary, "to dispose of the reversion of the MS. now." Accordingly, Moore, being then involved in pecuniary responsibilities by the defalcations of his deputy in Bermuda, endeavoured to dispose of the 'Memoirs of Lord Byron.' He first wrote to the Messrs. Longman, who did not offer him enough; and then to Mr. Murray, who offered him the sum of 2000 guineas, on condition that he should be the editor of the 'Memoirs,' and write the 'Life of Lord Byron.'

\* For Byron's reply to this letter, see Moore's Memoirs, iii. 115.

*John Murray to Lord Byron.*

July 24th, 1821.

DEAR LORD BYRON,

I have just received a letter from Mr. Moore—the subject of it is every way worthy of your usual liberality—and I had not a moment's hesitation in acceding to a proposal which enabled me in any way to join in assisting so excellent a fellow. I have told him—which I suppose you will think fair—that he should give me all additions that you may from time to time make—and in case of survivorship edit the whole—and I will leave it as an heirloom to my son.

I have written to accede to Mr. Moore's proposal.

I remain, dear Lord Byron,

Your grateful and faithful Servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

Mr. Moore accepted the proposal, and then proceeded to draw upon Mr. Murray for part of the money. It may be added that the agreement between Murray and Moore gave the former the right of publishing the 'Memoirs' three months after his Lordship's death. When that event was authenticated, the manuscript remained at Mr. Murray's absolute disposal if Moore had not previously redeemed it by the repayment of the 2000 guineas.

During the period that Mr. Moore had been in negotiation with the Longmans and Murray respecting the purchase of the Memoirs, he had given "Lady Holland the MS. to read." Lord John Russell also states, in his 'Memoirs of Moore,' that he had read "the greater part, if not the whole," and that he should say that some of it was too gross for publication. When the Memoirs came into the hands of Mr. Murray, he entrusted the manuscript to Mr. Gifford, whose opinion coincided with that of Lord John Russell. A few others saw the Memoirs, amongst them Washington

Irving and Mr. Luttrell. Irving says, in his 'Memoirs,' that Moore showed him the Byron recollections, and that they were quite unpublishable.

Mr. Moore himself seems to have been thrown into some doubt as to the sale of the manuscript by the opinion of his friends. "Lord Holland," he said, "expressed some scruples as to the sale of Lord Byron's Memoirs, and he wished that I could have got the 2000 guineas in any other way ; he seemed to think it was in cold blood, depositing a sort of quiver of poisoned arrows for a future warfare upon private character."\* Mr. Moore had a long conversation on the subject with Mr. J. C. Hobhouse, "who," he says in his journal, "is an upright and honest man." When speaking of Lord Byron, he said, "I know more about Lord Byron than any one else, and much more than I should wish any one else to know."

Lady Byron offered, through Mr. Kinnaid, to advance 2000 guineas for the redemption of the Memoirs from Mr. Murray, but the negotiation was not brought to a definite issue. Moore, when informed of the offer, objected to Lady Byron being consulted about the matter, "for this would be treachery to Lord Byron's intentions and wishes," but he agreed to place the Memoirs at the disposal of Lord Byron's sister, Mrs. Leigh, "to be done with exactly as she thought proper." He was of opinion that those parts of the manuscript should be destroyed which were found objectionable ; but that those parts should be retained which were not, for his benefit and that of the public. These were his own words.

At the same time it must be remembered that Moore's interest in the Memoirs had now entirely ceased, for in

\* Lord John Russell's 'Memoirs, Journals, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore,' iii. p. 298.

consequence of the death of Lord Byron they had become Mr. Murray's absolute property, in accordance with the terms of his purchase. But although Mr. Murray had paid so large a sum for the manuscript, and would probably have made a considerable profit by its publication, he was nevertheless willing to have it destroyed, if it should be the deliberate opinion of his Lordship's friends and relatives that such a step was desirable.

Mr. Murray therefore put himself into communication with Lord Byron's nearest friends and relations with respect to the disposal of the Memoirs. His suggestion was at first strongly opposed by some of them; but he urged his objections to publication with increased zeal, even renouncing every claim to indemnification for what he had paid to Mr. Moore. A meeting of those who were entitled to act in the matter was at length agreed upon, and the day preceding that on which it was to take place, Mr. Murray received the following letter from his old friend Mr. Barrow :—

*Mr. Barrow to John Murray.*

May 16th. 1824.

I enclose you a note from Sir William Hope, who is exceedingly interested in what concerns Lady Byron; and I have ventured to assure him that you will take no step hastily, and I have reason to believe that you have no other object than of being indemnified for the money you gave for the manuscript. It would be well got rid of, if he would take it off your hands and consign it to the flames. *Entre nous*, however, don't let any of the parties *see* it, or know what it contains.

Yours very faithfully,

JOHN BARROW.

The meeting at length took place in Murray's drawing-room, on the 17th of May, 1824. There were present

Mr. Murray, Mr. Moore, Mr. J. C. Hobhouse, Colonel Doyle representing Lady Byron, Mr. Wilmot Horton representing Mrs. Leigh, and Mr. Luttrell, a friend of Moore's. Young Mr. Murray—then sixteen; the only person of those assembled now living—was also in the room. The discussion was long and stormy before the meeting broke up, and nearly led to a challenge between Moore and Hobhouse. A reference to the agreement between Moore and Murray being necessary, for a long time that document could not be found; it was at length discovered, but only after the decision to commit the manuscript to the flames had been made and carried out, and the party remained until the last sheet of Lord Byron's Memoirs had vanished in smoke up the Albemarle Street chimney.

Immediately after the burning, Mrs. Leigh wrote the following account to her friend, the Rev. Mr. Hodgson, an old friend of Byron's:—

*The Hon. Mrs. Leigh to the Rev. F. Hodgson.*

"The parties, Messrs. Moore, Murray, Hobhouse, Col. Doyle for Lady B., and Mr. Wilmot for me, and Mr. Luttrell, a friend of Mr. Moore's, met at Mr. Murray's; and after a long dispute and nearly quarrelling, upon Mr. Wilmot stating what was my wish and opinion, the MS. was burnt, and Moore paid Murray the 2000 guineas. Immediately almost *after* this was done, the legal agreement between Moore and Murray (which had been mislaid) was found, and, strange to say, it appeared from it (what both had forgotten), that the property of the MS. was Murray's *bonâ fide*. Consequently *he* had the right to dispose of it as he pleased; and as he had behaved most handsomely upon the occasion. . . . it was desired by our family that he should receive the 2000 guineas back." \*

But the Byrons did not repay the money. Mr. Moore would not permit it. He had borrowed the 2000 guineas

\* 'Memoir of the Rev. F. Hodgson,' ii. 139-40.

from the Messrs. Longman, and before he left the room, he repaid to Mr. Murray the sum he had received for the Memoirs, together with the interest during the time that the purchase-money had remained in his possession.

The statements made in the press, as to Lord Byron's Memoirs having been burnt, occasioned much public excitement, and many applications were made to Mr. Murray for information on the subject. Amongst those who made particular inquiry was Mr. Jerdan, of the *Literary Gazette*, who inclosed to Mr. Murray the paragraph which he proposed to insert in his journal. Mr. Murray informed him that the account was so very erroneous, that he desired him either to condense it down to the smallest compass, or to omit it altogether. Mr. Jerdan, however, replied that the subject was of so much public interest, that he could not refuse to state the particulars, and the following was sent to him, prepared by Mr. Murray :—

“A general interest having been excited, touching the fate of Lord Byron's Memoirs, written by himself, and reports, confused and incorrect, having got into circulation upon the subject, it has been deemed requisite to signify the real particulars. The manuscript of these Memoirs was purchased by Mr. Murray in the year 1821 for the sum of two thousand guineas, under certain stipulations which gave him the right of publishing them three months after his Lordship's demise. When that event was authenticated, the Manuscript consequently remained at Mr. Murray's absolute disposal ; and a day or two after the melancholy intelligence reached London, Mr. Murray submitted to the near connections of the family that the MSS. should be destroyed. In consequence of this, five persons variously concerned in the matter were convened for discussion upon it. As these Memoirs were not calculated to augment the fame of the writer, and as some passages were penned in a spirit which his better feelings since had virtually retracted, Mr. Murray proposed that they should be destroyed, con-



sidering it a duty to sacrifice every view of profit to the noble author, by whose confidence and friendship he had been so long honoured. The result has been, that notwithstanding some opposition, he obtained the desired decision, and the Manuscript was forthwith committed to the flames. Mr. Murray was immediately reimbursed in the purchase-money by Mr. Moore, although Mr. Murray had previously renounced every claim to repayment."

The particulars of the transaction are more fully expressed in the following letter written by Mr. Murray to Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Wilmot Horton, two days after the destruction of the Manuscript. It seems that Mr. Moore had already made a representation to Mr. Horton which was not quite correct.\*

*John Murray to Mr. R. Wilmot Horton.*

Albemarle Street, May 19th, 1824.

DEAR SIR,

On my return home last night I found your letter, dated the 17th, calling on me for a specific answer whether I acknowledged the accuracy of the statement of Mr. Moore, communicated in it. However unpleasant it is to me, your requisition of a specific answer obliges me to say that I cannot, by any means, admit the accuracy of that statement; and in order to explain to you how Mr. Moore's misapprehension may have arisen, and the ground upon which my assertion rests, I feel it necessary to trouble you with a statement of all the circumstances of the case, which will enable you to judge for yourself.

Lord Byron having made Mr. Moore a present of his Memoirs, Mr. Moore offered them for sale to Messrs. Longman and Co., who however declined to purchase them; Mr. Moore then made me a similar offer, which I accepted; and in November 1821, a joint assignment of the Memoirs was made to me by Lord Byron and Mr. Moore, with all legal technicalities, in consideration of a sum of 2000 guineas, which, on the execution of the agreement by Mr. Moore, I

\* Lord J. Russell's 'Memoirs. &c., of Thomas Moore,' iv. p. 188.

paid to him. Mr. Moore also covenanted, in consideration of the said sum, to act as Editor of the Memoirs, and to supply an account of the subsequent events of Lord Byron's life, &c.

Some months after the execution of this assignment, Mr. Moore requested me, as a great personal favour to himself and to Lord Byron, to enter into a second agreement, by which I should resign the absolute property which I had in the Memoirs, and give Mr. Moore and Lord Byron, or any of their friends, a power of redemption *during the life of Lord Byron*. As the reason pressed upon me for this change was that their friends thought there were some things in the Memoirs that might be injurious to both, I did not hesitate to make this alteration at Mr. Moore's request; and, accordingly, on the 6th day of May, 1822, a second deed was executed, stating that, "Whereas Lord Byron and Mr. Moore are now inclined to wish the said work not to be published, it is agreed that, if either of them shall, *during the life of the said Lord Byron*, repay the 2000 guineas to Mr. Murray, the latter shall redeliver the Memoirs; but that, if the sum be not repaid *during the lifetime of Lord Byron*, Mr. Murray shall be at full liberty to print and publish the said Memoirs within Three Months\* after the death of the said Lord Byron." I need hardly call your particular attention to the words, carefully inserted twice over in this agreement, which limited its existence to the *lifetime of Lord Byron*; the reason of such limitation was obvious and natural—namely that, although I consented to restore the work, *while Lord Byron should be alive* to direct the ulterior disposal of it, I would by no means consent to place it *after his death* at the disposal of any other person.

I must now observe that I had never been able to obtain possession of the original assignment, which was my sole lien on this property, although I had made repeated applications to Mr. Moore to put me into possession of the deed, which was stated to be in the hands of Lord Byron's banker. Feeling, I confess, in some degree alarmed at the withholding the deed, and dissatisfied at Mr. Moore's inattention

\* The words "within Three Months" were substituted for "immediately," at Mr. Moore's request—and they appear in pencil, in his own handwriting, upon the original draft of the deed, which is still in existence.

to my interests in this particular, I wrote urgently to him in March 1823, to procure me the deed, and at the same time expressed my wish that the second agreement should either be cancelled or *at once executed*.

Finding this application unavailing, and becoming, by the greater lapse of time, still more doubtful as to what the intentions of the parties might be, I, in March 1824, repeated my demand to Mr. Moore in a more peremptory manner, and was in consequence at length put into possession of the original deed. But, not being at all satisfied with the course that had been pursued towards me, I repeated to Mr. Moore my uneasiness at the terms on which I stood under the second agreement, and renewed my request to him that he would either cancel it, or execute its provisions by the immediate redemption of the work, in order that I might exactly know what my rights in the property were. He requested time to consider this proposition. In a day or two he called, and told me that he would adopt the latter alternative—namely, the redemption of the Memoirs—as he had found persons who were ready to advance the money on *his insuring his life*; and he promised to conclude the business on the first day of his return to town, by paying the money and giving up the agreement. Mr. Moore did return to town, but did not, that I have heard of, take any proceedings for insuring his life; he positively neither wrote nor called upon me as he had promised to do (though he was generally accustomed to make mine one of his first houses of call);—nor did he take any other step, that I am aware of, to show that he had any recollection of the conversation which had passed between us previous to his leaving town, until *the death of Lord Byron* had, *ipso facto*, cancelled the agreement in question, and completely restored my absolute rights over the property of the Memoirs.

You will therefore perceive that there was no verbal agreement in existence between Mr. Moore and me, at the time I made a verbal agreement with you to deliver the Memoirs to be destroyed. Mr. Moore might undoubtedly, *during Lord Byron's life*, have obtained possession of the Memoirs, if he had pleased to do so; he however neglected or delayed to give effect to our verbal agreement, which, as well as the written instrument to which it related, being cancelled by the death of Lord Byron, there was no reason

whatsoever why I was not at that instant perfectly at liberty to dispose of the MS. as I thought proper. Had I considered only my own interest as a tradesman, I would have announced the work for immediate publication, and I cannot doubt that, under all the circumstances, the public curiosity about these Memoirs would have given me a very considerable profit beyond the large sum I originally paid for them ; but you yourself are, I think, able to do me the justice of bearing witness that I looked at the case with no such feelings, and that my regard for Lord Byron's memory, and my respect for his surviving family, made me more anxious that the Memoirs should be immediately destroyed, since it was surmised that the publication might be injurious to the former and painful to the latter.

As I myself scrupulously refrained from looking into the Memoirs, I cannot, from my own knowledge, say whether such an opinion of the contents was correct or not ; it was enough for me that the friends of Lord and Lady Byron united in wishing for their destruction. Why Mr. Moore should have wished to preserve them I did not nor will I inquire ; but, having satisfied myself that he had no right whatever in them, I was happy in having an opportunity of making, by a pecuniary sacrifice on my part, some return for the honour, and I must add, the profit, which I had derived from Lord Byron's patronage and friendship. You will also be able to bear witness that—although I could not presume to impose an obligation on the friends of Lord Byron or Mr. Moore, by refusing to receive the repayment of the 2000 guineas advanced by me—yet I had determined on the destruction of the Memoirs without any previous agreement for such repayment :—and you know the Memoirs were actually destroyed without any stipulation on my part, but even with a declaration that I had destroyed my own private property—and I therefore had no claim upon any party for remuneration.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your faithful servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

After the burning of the Manuscript Sir Walter Scott wrote in his diary : "It was a pity that nothing save the

total destruction of Byron's Memoirs would satisfy his executors; but there was a reason—*premat nex alta*." Thomas Mitchell sympathized with Murray. He wrote, "I hope you still feel satisfied with the reflection that you have sacrificed a fortune to preserve public decency and private tranquillity." Yet he could not but feel intense regret at the death of the Poet.

*Mr. Thomas Mitchell to John Murray.*

"Poor Lord Byron! No person's death has ever yet had the effect upon me which his had. I had a full persuasion, however, that his career would be a short one, and I never took up a paper with intelligence from Greece in it without the apprehension of seeing that Lord Byron had fallen in battle—the fate which my mind had assigned to him."

Immediately after the death of Lord Byron, Mr. Colburn published a work containing his Conversations with Mr. Medwin. These were found to contain many false as well as libellous statements against Mr. Murray, and it became necessary for him to answer them. He first consulted Mr. Sharon Turner, who conferred with Mr. (afterwards Baron) Parke on the subject.

*Mr. Turner to John Murray.*

October 30th, 1824.

MY DEAR MURRAY,

It is vexatious enough to be talked of in print just as people choose to fancy or represent us; but it is the price we must pay for notoriety. Only the obscure can escape it, and you are not among their number. Like the King, Mr. Pitt, Southey, and everybody else, if you will have fame—and now you cannot help it—you must submit to have this unpleasant taxation on your comfort. I think with Mr. Parke that it is libellous; but, as Medwin is not the actual speaker, a jury would not give much damages.

Perhaps, if Colburn would suppress it on the next edition, that it may not go down to posterity, that would be the best thing ; and if he were told that Parke thought it libellous, he would most likely consent to do so. I am not disposed to advise you to bring an action upon it. The whole book tends to undo much of the *prestige* with which Lord Byron's character had been artificially surrounded, and that perhaps will be some satisfaction to you. It was idly said, and still more idly believed, that his death would ruin the Greek cause. I was astonished at the assertion, and thought that, if true, the Greeks ought to fail, and, lo ! they have been doing still better ever since.

Yours most truly,

SHARON TURNER.

I think a neat vindication of yourself from Lord Byron's correspondence would be a fair and an admirable and an acceptable thing.

Mr. Murray, acting on the advice offered by Mr. Turner in his postscript, prepared a short pamphlet, which he circulated widely, containing *seriatim* Mr. Medwin's statements of what he alleged Lord Byron to have said, contrasted with extracts from Lord Byron's own letters, which Murray printed side by side in double columns. In every case Mr. Medwin's statements were flatly contradicted by Lord Byron's own words ; and the pamphlet, though in a small compass, was considered one of the most effective replies which have ever been made to an accusation of the kind. One proof of this is that Mr. Medwin never attempted any repetition or vindication of his charges.\*

Shortly after the burning of the Memoirs, Mr. Moore began to meditate writing a Life of Lord Byron ; "the

\* The Pamphlet on "Conversations of Lord Byron, as related by Thomas Medwin, Esq., compared with a portion of his Lordship's correspondence," is printed at the end of Mr. Murray's octavo edition of Lord Byron's works.

Longmans looking earnestly and anxiously to it as the great source of my means of repaying them their money.”\* Mr. Moore could not as yet, however, proceed with the Life, as the most important letters of Lord Byron were those written to Mr. Murray, which were in his exclusive possession. Lord John Russell also was against his writing the Life of Byron.

“If you write,” he wrote to Moore, “write poetry, or, if you can find a good subject, write prose; but do not undertake to write the life of another reprobate [referring to Moore’s ‘Life of Sheridan.’] In short, do anything but write the life of Lord Byron.”†

Yet Moore grievously wanted money, and this opportunity presented itself to him with irresistible force as a means of adding to his resources. At length he became reconciled to Mr. Murray through the intercession of Mr. Hobhouse. Moore informed the Longmans of the reconciliation, and, in a liberal and considerate manner, they said to him, “Do not let us stand in the way of any arrangements you may make; it is our wish to see you free from debt, and it would be only in this one work that we should be separated.” It was in this way that Mr. Moore undertook to write for Mr. Murray the Life of Lord Byron. Mr. Murray agreed to repay Moore the 2000 guineas he had given for the burned Memoirs and £2000 extra for editing the letters and writing the Life, and Moore in his diary says that he considered this offer perfectly liberal. Nothing, he adds, could be more frank, gentleman-like, and satisfactory than the manner in which this affair had been settled on all sides.

\* Moore’s Memoirs, &c., iv. 253.

† Ibid. v. 51.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## BLACKWOOD AND MURRAY—SCOTT'S NOVELS.

THE account of Mr. Murray's dealings with Lord Byron has carried us considerably beyond the date at which we left the history of his general business transactions, and compels us to go back to the year 1814, when, as is related in a previous chapter, he had associated himself with William Blackwood as his Edinburgh agent.

There was much in this alliance which augured well for the prospects of both parties. Blackwood was young, active, and shrewd, and well aware of the advantages which connection with Murray offered to him; he was, moreover, a man of no little literary ability, and a very good letter-writer, as will be seen from the specimens given below. On the other hand, the literary society of Edinburgh was then at the height of its fame, and it was essential to Murray, who could not afford the time to pay many visits to the North, to have a worthy and energetic representative of his interests, qualified to tell him what was passing there, and to carry on communications with the leading men. The alliance between Murray and Blackwood was close, and matters of no little interest passed between them during the existence of the connection.

When Blackwood removed his publishing premises from South Bridge Street to Princes Street, in the new town,



his office became a sort of literary lounge, and was frequented by Mackenzie (the Man of Feeling), Walter Scott, William Erskine, John Wilson, Lockhart, James Hogg, and a host of rising literary men. They looked in to see what new books were coming out, and to hear the literary gossip from the great Metropolis, of which Murray supplied Blackwood with information. Blackwood, on his part, kept Murray advised as to the new works by the author of 'Waverley.'

At the beginning of January 1815 Blackwood wrote to Murray that he had seen Ballantyne, and found a copy of 'Guy Mannering' lying on his table.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

"He would not allow me to look at it, but he read me a few pages. The painting is admirable and quite graphic—Scottish to the life. From this specimen, and what Ballantyne told me about it, it will be a wonderful performance, and greatly superior to 'Waverley,' both in interest and effect."

Blackwood had also seen and read the 'Lord of the Isles,' avowedly by Scott, but he was grievously disappointed with it.

"I regret the loss of 'Guy Mannering,'" he added, "much more than this splendid two guinea quarto. If Walter Scott be the author of the novel, he stands far higher in my opinion in this line than in his former walk. Ballantyne made great professions of his regret that we were not the publishers. Whether he is sincere or not, time will prove; but he has great expectations of more from the same hand, and says it will not be his fault if they do not take the proper direction. He is to have the whole of the MS on Tuesday, when we will have our second and, I hope final sitting. I need not tell you to keep all this most strictly to yourself, as there would be the devil to pay if

Constable knew that I had seen or heard a line of it. Yesterday I wrote a letter of thanks to Ballantyne for the delight I had received, and expressed my feelings in the best way I could with regard to this beautiful production. I did not of course appear in it at all as the Bookseller, but merely as the Amateur. I know he will have shown my letter to the author, and though humble the offering, as it will be the first, it may perhaps be of some use to the Bookseller."

He again refers to 'Guy Mannering,' the first two volumes of which he had now finished, and was even more delighted with it than before. Who could be the author? He doubted whether Walter Scott could be the man, after his production of the 'Lord of the Isles.'

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Feb. 15th, 1815.

"Some circumstances have occurred which strengthen my suspicion with regard to William Erskine having a hand in it; but still it is only a suspicion. There is much greater invention, and far more feeling, than I have ever seen Walter Scott display in any of his works. You will be surprised when I tell you that it has been whispered that the Ballantynes have some hand in it themselves. . . . When you have seen the book, I am confident you will agree with me that there is no property of the kind that it would be more desirable to possess."

In October Scott published his poem, the 'Field of Waterloo,' and its appearance convinced Blackwood that Scott was not the author of 'Guy Mannering.'

"I am pretty certain," he wrote (1st January, 1816), "that the 'Antiquary' is not gone to press, as I believe with you there was not a line of it written (if there is yet) when it was first announced. From every investigation I can make, I am still of opinion that Scott is not the author. Who can he be? Among others, Greenfield was mentioned to me the other day, but this is highly improbable. . . . I dare say you are well rid of Leigh Hunt; and I

really pity you when I think of the difficulty you must often have in managing with authors, and particularly with the friends of authors whom you wish to oblige."

When Murray was about to publish Byron's 'Siege of Corinth' and 'Parisina,' he promised to send the early sheets to Blackwood, who proposed to hold a dinner in honour of the occasion, to which Scott, Erskine, and James Ballantyne were to be invited. Scott had a particular engagement with The Macleod, and, unfortunately, could not accept the invitation for the day named; but, to secure his attendance, the dinner was put off for a week, and then he made his appearance with Erskine and Ballantyne. The poems were read, to the immense delight of the audience. After the dinner, Blackwood wrote:—

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Feb. 9th, 1816.

"I saw Ballantyne to-day. He says Mr. Scott is quite enthusiastic with regard to the Poems ['Siege of Corinth' and 'Parisina'], and considers Monday's meeting one of the highest treats and the greatest favours ever done him. . . He assured me that Mr. Scott would take an interest in me, and matters would take that turn with you and me which I had so long been wishing to bring about. Constable, Ballantyne told me in confidence, had been doing everything he could to tease and torment Mr. Scott. So all goes on well. Independent of the delight of listening to Lord Byron's poetry, it was one of the great objects I had in being so anxious for your sending me the Poems, that I might have an opportunity of drawing closer, as it were, to Mr. Scott, and at the same time show him the confidence you had in me and the friendship you showed me. All this acts for our mutual interest."

Feb. 11th, 1816.

"The announcement of Byron's Poems has created a great buzz here. It has also got over the whole town that Mr. Scott had dined with me, and read them, and was in

raptures with them. I did not mean to have said anything about this, but Mr. S. and Ballantyne talked about it, and it spread abroad like wildfire. I should have liked very much to have seen Constable when he first heard the intelligence."

Mr. Blackwood was at this time straining every nerve to consolidate his business, and to form such connections as should conduce not only to the commercial prosperity, but to the literary credit of his firm. In this he was but following in the footsteps of Murray, to whom he wrote:—"In your connections with literary men, when I consider the books you have published and are to publish, you have the happiness of making it a liberal profession, and not a mere business of the pence. This I consider one of the greatest privileges we have in our business."

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

February 23rd, 1816.

"It flatters me not a little that your views of our business agree so exactly with my own. Indeed, I knew this well enough before. You have it in your power fully to realize your conceptions: here I must be content to creep on; but limited as my sphere for some time must be, I will always be able, I hope, to keep up the character and respect which I consider is due to our profession when liberally conducted. Every one will regret that they did not push on this improvement in literature at the periods most favourable for its advancement, but I don't think you have much reason to blame yourself.

"Your anxiety about your son's improvement is most natural, and I anxiously hope he will prove worthy of all your cares. There is one thing, however, which in England you have to contend with. You cannot give a young man the proper education, nor the proper associates who are likely to be useful to him in after life, without sending him to one of your great schools. There—though he may become learned, and acquire the manners of a gentleman—the danger is, that his mind may not be early accustomed

to the regular labour and routine of steady and active business."

At length Mr. Blackwood found an opening into the higher class of publications. He, like Murray, was anxious to have a share in the business of publishing the works of Walter Scott—especially the novels teeming from the press by "The Author of 'Waverley.'" Although Constable and the Ballantynes were necessarily admitted to the knowledge of their authorship, to the world at large they were anonymous, and the author still remained unknown. Mr. Murray had, indeed, pointed out to Mr. Canning that 'Waverley' was by Walter Scott; but Scott himself trailed so many red herrings across the path, that publishers as well as the public were thrown off the scent, and both Blackwood and Murray continued to be at fault with respect to the authorship of the 'Waverley Novels.'

In February 1816 Ballantyne assured Blackwood that in a very few weeks he would have something very important to propose. On the 12th of April following, Blackwood addressed the following letter to Murray, "most strictly confidential;" and it contained important proposals:—

*Mr. W. Blackwood to John Murray.*

MY DEAR MURRAY,

Some time ago I wrote to you that James Ballantyne had dined with me, and from what then passed I expected that I would soon have something very important to communicate. He has now fully explained himself to me, with liberty to inform you of anything he has communicated. This, however, he entreats of us to keep most strictly to ourselves, trusting to our honour that we will not breathe a syllable of it to the dearest friends we have.

He began by telling me that he thought he had it now in his power to show me how sensible he was of the services I had done him, and how anxious he was to

accomplish that union of interests which I had so long been endeavouring to bring about. Till now he had only made professions; now he would act. He said that he was empowered to offer me, along with you, a work of fiction in four volumes, such as *Waverley*, &c.; that he had read a considerable part of it; and, knowing the plan of the whole, he could answer for its being a production of the very first class; but that he was not at liberty to mention its title, nor was he at liberty to give the author's name. I naturally asked him, was it by the author of '*Waverley*'? He said it was to have no reference to any other work whatever, and every one would be at liberty to form their own conjectures as to the author. He only requested that, whatever we might suppose from anything that might occur afterwards, we should keep strictly to ourselves that we were to be the publishers. The terms he was empowered by the author to offer for it were—

1. The author to receive one-half of the profits of each edition; these profits to be ascertained by deducting the paper and printing from the proceeds of the book sold at sale price; the publishers to be at the whole of the expense of advertising.
2. The property of the book to be the publishers', who were to print such editions as they chose.
3. The only condition upon which the author would agree to these terms is, that the publisher should take £600 of John Ballantyne's stock, selected from the list annexed, deducting 25 per cent. from the affixed sale prices.
4. If these terms are agreed to, the stock to the above amount to be immediately delivered, and a bill granted at twelve months.
5. That in the course of six or eight weeks, J. B. expected to be able to put into my hands the first two volumes printed, and that if on perusal we did not like the bargain, we should be at liberty to give it up. This he considered to be most unlikely; but if it should be the case, he would bind himself to repay or redeliver the bill on the books being returned.
6. That the edition, consisting of 2000 copies, should be printed and ready for delivery by the 1st of October next.

I have thus stated to you as nearly as I can the substance of what passed. I tried in various ways to learn something with regard to the author; but he was quite impenetrable. My own impression now is, that it must be Walter Scott, for no one else would think of burdening us

with such trash as John B.'s wretched stock. This is such a burden, that I am puzzled not a little. I endeavoured every way I could to get him to propose other terms, but he told me they could not be departed from in a single part ; and the other works had been taken on the same conditions, and he knew they would be greedily accepted again in the same quarter. Consider the matter seriously, and write to me as soon as you can. After giving it my consideration, and making some calculations, I confess I feel inclined to hazard the speculation ; but still I feel doubtful until I hear what you think of it. Do not let my opinion, which may be erroneous, influence you, but judge for yourself. From the very strong terms in which Jas. B. spoke of the work, I am sanguine enough to expect it will equal if not surpass any of the others. I would not lay so much stress upon what he says if I were not assured that his great interest, as well as Mr. Scott's, is to stand in the very best way both with you and me. They are anxious to get out of the clutches of Constable, and Ballantyne is sensible of the favour I have done and may still do him by giving so much employment, besides what he may expect from you. From Constable he can expect nothing. I had almost forgotten to mention that he assured me in the most solemn manner that we had got the first offer, and he ardently hoped we would accept of it. If, however, we did not, he trusted to our honour that we would say nothing of it ; that the author of this work would likely write more ; and should we not take this, we might have it in our power afterwards to do something with him, provided we acted with delicacy in the transaction, as he had no doubt we would do. I hope you will be able to write to me soon, and as fully as you can. If I have time to-morrow, or I should rather say this day, as it is now near one o'clock, I will write you about other matters ; and if I have no letter from you, will perhaps give you another scolding.

Yours most truly,

W. BLACKWOOD.

A long correspondence took place between Blackwood and Murray on Ballantyne's proposal. Blackwood was inclined to accept, notwithstanding the odd nature of the

proposal, in the firm belief that "the heart's desire" of Ballantyne was to get rid of Constable. He sent Murray a list of Ballantyne's stock, from which the necessary value of books was to be selected. It appeared, however, that there was one point on which Blackwood had been mistaken, and that was, that the copyright of the new novel was not to be absolutely conveyed, and that all that Ballantyne meant, or had authority to offer, was an edition, limited to six thousand copies, of the proposed work. Although Murray considered it "a blind bargain," he was disposed to accept it, as it might lead to something better. Blackwood accordingly communicated to Ballantyne that he and Murray accepted his offer.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

April 27th, 1816.

"Everything is settled, and on Tuesday Ballantyne is to give a letter specifying the whole terms of the transaction. He could not do it sooner, he said, as he had to consult the author. This, I think, makes it clear that it is Walter Scott, who is at Abbotsford just now. What surprised me a good deal was, James Ballantyne told me that his brother John had gone out there with Constable, and Godwin (author of 'Caleb Williams'), whom Scott was anxious to see. They are really a strange set of people. . . . I am not over fond of all these mysteries, but they are a mysterious set of personages, and we must manage with them in the best way that we can."

A letter followed from James Ballantyne to Murray (1st May, 1816), congratulating him upon concluding the bargain through Blackwood, and saying:—

"I have taken the liberty of drawing upon you at twelve months for £300 for your share. . . . It will be a singularly great accommodation if you can return the bill in course of post."



Although Ballantyne had promised that the first edition of the proposed work should be ready by the 1st of October, 1816, Blackwood found that in June the printing of the work had not yet commenced. Ballantyne said he had not yet got any part of the manuscript from the author, but that he would press him again on the subject. The controversy still continued as to the authorship of the Waverley Novels. "For these six months past," wrote Blackwood (6th June, 1816), "there have been various rumours with regard to Greenfield being the author of these Novels, but I never paid much attention to it; the thing appeared to me so very improbable. . . . But from what I have heard lately, and from what you state, I now begin to think that Greenfield may probably be the author." On the other hand, Mr. Mackenzie called upon Blackwood, and informed him that "he was now quite convinced that Thomas Scott, Walter's brother in Canada, writes all the novels." The secret, however, was kept for many years longer.

Blackwood became quite provoked at the delay in proceeding with the proposed work.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

June 21st, 1816.

"I begin to fear that S. B. and Cy. are a nest of ——. There is neither faith nor truth in them. In my last letter I mentioned to you that there was not the smallest appearance of the work being yet begun, and there is as little still. James Ballantyne shifts this off his own shoulders by saying that he cannot help it. Now, my own belief is that at the time he made such solemn promises to me that the first volume would be in my hands in a month, he had not the smallest expectation of this being the case; but he knew that he would not have got our bills, which he absolutely wanted, without holding this out. It is now seven weeks since the bills

were granted, and it is five weeks since I gave him the list of books which were to be delivered. I have applied to him again and again for them, and on Tuesday last his man at length called on me to say that John Ballantyne and Co. could not deliver fifty sets of 'Kerr's Voyages'—that they had only such quantities of particular odd volumes of which he showed me a list."

Blackwood called upon Ballantyne, but he could not see him, and instead of returning Blackwood's visit, he sent a note of excuse. Next time they met was at Hollingworth's Hotel, after which Ballantyne sent Blackwood a letter "begging for a loan of £50 till next week, but not a word of business in it." Next time they met was at the same hotel, when the two dined with Robert Miller.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

"After dinner I walked home with J. B. Perhaps from the wine he had drunk, he was very communicative, and gave me a great deal of very curious and interesting private history. Would you believe it, that about six weeks ago—at the very time our transaction was going on—these worthies, Scott, Ballantyne & Co., concluded a transaction with Constable for 10,000 copies of this said 'History of Scotland' [which had been promised to Blackwood and Murray] in 4 vols., and actually received bills for the profits expected to be realized from this large number! Yet, when I put James Ballantyne in mind on Tuesday of what he had formally proposed by desire of Mr. Scott, and assured us we were positively to get the work, and asked him if there was any truth in the rumour I had heard, and even that you had heard, about Mr. Scott being about to publish a 'History of Scotland' with his name, and further asked him if Mr. Scott was now ready to make any arrangements with us about it (for it never occurred to me that he could make arrangements with any one else), he solemnly assured me that he knew nothing about it! Now, after this, what confidence can we have in anything that this man will say or profess! I confess I am sadly mortified at my own credulousness. John I

always considered as no better than a swindler, but James I put some trust and confidence in. You judged more accurately, for you always said that 'he was a damned cunning fellow!' Well, there is every appearance of your being right; but his cunning (as it never does) will not profit him. Within these three years I have given him nearly £1400 for printing, and in return have only received empty professions, made, to be sure, in the most dramatic manner. Trite as the saying is, honesty is always the best policy; and if we live a little longer, we shall see what will be the end of all their cunning, never-ending labyrinths of plots and schemes. Constable is the proper person for them; set a thief to catch a thief: Jonathan Wild will be fully a match for any of the heroes of the 'Beggar's Opera.' My blood boils when I think of them, and still more when I think of my allowing myself so long to keep my eyes shut to what I ought to have seen long ago. But the only apology I make to myself is, that one does not wish to think so ill of human nature. There is an old Scotch proverb, 'He has need o' a lang spoon that sups wi' the De'il,' and since we are engaged, let us try if we can partake of the broth without scalding ourselves. I still hope that we may; and however much my feelings revolt at having any connection in future with them, yet I shall endeavour to the best of my power to repress my bile, and to turn their own tricks against themselves. One in business must submit to many things, and swallow many a bitter pill, when such a man as Walter Scott is the object in view. You will see, by this day's Edinburgh papers, that the copartnery of John Ballantyne & Co. is formally dissolved. Miller told me that, before James Ballantyne could get his wife's friends to assent to the marriage, Walter Scott was obliged to grant bonds and securities, taking upon himself all the engagements of John Ballantyne & Co., as well as of James Ballantyne & Co.;\* so that, if there was any difficulty on their part, he bound himself to fulfil the whole. When we consider the large sums of money Walter Scott has got for his works, the greater part of which has been thrown into

\* Lockhart says, in his 'Life of Scott,' that "on Feb., 1816, when James Ballantyne married, it is clearly proved, by letters in his handwriting, that he owed to Scott more than £3000 of personal debt."

the hands of the Ballantynes, and likewise the excellent printing business J. B. has had for so many years, it is quite incomprehensible what has become of all the money. Miller says, 'It is just a jaw hole which swallows up all,' and from what he has heard he does not believe Walter Scott is worth anything."

Murray was nevertheless willing to go on until the terms of his bargain with Ballantyne were fulfilled, and wrote to Blackwood that he was "resolved to swallow the pill, bitter though it was," but he expressed his surprise that "Mr. Scott should have allowed his property to be squandered as it has been by these people."

Blackwood, however, was in great anxiety about the transaction, fearing the result of the engagement which he and Murray had entered into.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

July 2nd. 1816.

"This morning I got up between five and six, but instead of sitting down to write to you, as I had intended, I mounted my pony and took a long ride to collect my thoughts. Sitting, walking, or riding is all the same. I feel as much puzzled as ever, and undetermined whether or not to cut the Gordian knot. Except my wife, there is not a friend whom I dare advise with. I have not once ventured to mention the business at all to my brother, on account of the cursed mysteries and injunctions of secrecy connected with it. I know he would blame me for ever engaging in it, for he has a very small opinion of the Ballantynes. I cannot therefore be benefited by his advice. Mrs. Blackwood, though she always disliked my having any connection with the Ballantynes, rather thinks we should wait a few weeks longer, till we see what is produced. I believe, after all, this is the safest course to pursue. I would beg of you, however, to think maturely upon the affair, taking into account Mr. Scott's usefulness to the *Review*. Take a day or two to consider the matter fully, and then give me your best advice. . . . As to Constable or his triumphs, as he will consider them, I

perfectly agree with you that they are not to be coveted by us, and that they should not give us a moment's thought. Thank God, we shall never desire to compass any of our ends by underhand practices."

Mr. Croker paid a visit to Edinburgh about this time, and was the bearer of a letter of introduction from Murray to Blackwood, who assisted in doing the honours and showing him over the city. Blackwood called upon Walter Scott to give him the news of Croker's arrival. "He received me," he writes to Murray, "with all his usual kindness, but never a syllable about anything else." Professor Jameson was to show the distinguished visitor over his Museum, Dr. Brewster was to exhibit the Observatory and its instruments; and Blackwood was to show him everything else that was worthy to be seen—the Castle, Holyrood, and the Old Town. After spending a delightful morning with Mr. Croker, Blackwood writes :—

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

July 12th, 1816.

"I think I have never been so much gratified with any one. His quickness of mind, intelligence, and activity are surprising; and what gives a complete charm to the whole is the simplicity and perfect gentlemanly tone of his manners. . . . He went to the Castle, Holyrood House, and Nelson's Monument before breakfast. He is quite delighted with Edinburgh. Lord Dalhousie and Governor Houston breakfasted with us. . . . We have since been in the Court hearing a trial. Mr. Scott and Mr. Erskine then went with us to the Advocates' Library and the High Church. To-morrow morning we start for Arthur's Seat. . . . Many are the favours you have done me, my dear friend, but this introduction is beyond them all."

Meanwhile correspondence with Ballantyne about the work of fiction—the name of which was still unknown—was still proceeding. Ballantyne said that the author

"promised to put the first volume in his hands by the end of August, and that the whole would be ready for publication by Christmas." Blackwood thought this reply was "humbug, as formerly." Nevertheless, he was obliged to wait. At last he got the first sight of the manuscript.

*Mr. Wm. Blackwood to John Murray.*

August 23rd, 1816. Midnight.

"MY DEAR MURRAY,—I have this moment finished the reading of 192 pages of our book—for ours it must be,—and I cannot go to bed without telling you what is the strong and most favourable impression it has made upon me. If the remainder be at all equal—which it cannot fail to be, from the genius displayed in what is now before me—we have been most fortunate indeed. The title is, *TALES OF MY LANDLORD; collected and reported by Jedediah Cleishbotham, Parish Clerk and Schoolmaster of Gandercleugh.*"

Mr. Blackwood then proceeds to give an account of the Introduction, the commencement of "The Black Dwarf," the first of the tales, and the general nature of the story, to the end of the fourth chapter. His letter is of great length, and extends to nine quarto pages. He concludes:—

"There cannot be a doubt as to the splendid merit of the work. It would never have done to have hesitated and higgled about seeing more volumes. In the note which accompanied the sheets, Ballantyne says, 'each volume contains a Tale,' so there will be four in all.\* The next relates to the period of the Covenanters. I have now neither doubts nor fears with regard to the whole being good, and I anxiously hope that you will have as little. I am so happy at the fortunate termination of all my pains and anxieties, that I cannot be in bad humour with you for not writing me two lines in answer to my last letters. I hope I shall hear from you to-morrow; but I entreat of you to write me in course of post, as I wish to hear from you before I leave this [for London], which I intend to do on this day se'nnight by the smack."

\* This, the original intention, was departed from.

In a later letter Blackwood writes to Murray that he has received a communication from James Ballantyne :—

*Mr. James Ballantyne to Mr. Wm. Blackwood.*

August 28th, 1816.

I have had a letter from a worthy friend, Jedediah Cleishbotham, who says, 'I return the letter of Mr. Blackwood, and am glad he is pleased; but he will like the second volume better than the first, and so will you, I think. But I want some Covenanting books sadly, to ascertain and identify my facts and dates by, before committing myself to the inevitable operation of the proofs. The following I especially want' [here Mr. Cleishbotham enumerates Hodson's 'History of the Sufferings of the Kirk,' and a number of others, all of which I had it fortunately in my power to send to Ballantyne, along with some others which I know he would like to see]. 'Without the means of the most accurate confirmation of what I have written, with these volumes, Jedediah hath too much regard unto verity to print or publish. The sooner they can be supplied, the sooner you will receive the copy. I have some thoughts of writing a Glossary, in the name and style of said learned Jedediah. I am, if I may say so, confident of the success of this work!' This is no bad heartening—although it must be confessed that authors are not the best judges of their own composition. I do not hope to like the Covenanting tale better than the 'Black Dwarf.'

Your, &c.,

J. B.

At length the principal part of the manuscript of the novel was in the press, and, as both the author and the printer were in sore straits for money, they became importunate on Blackwood and Murray for payment on account. They had taken Ballantyne's "wretched stock" of books, as Blackwood styled them, and Lockhart, in his 'Life of Scott,' infers that Murray had consented to anticipate the period of his payments. At all events, he finds in a letter of Scott's, written in August, these words to John Ballantyne :—

“Dear John,—I have the pleasure to enclose Murray’s acceptances. I earnestly recommend you to push, realising as much as you can.

“Consider weel, gude mon.  
We hae but borrowed gear,  
The horse that I ride on,  
It is John Murray’s mear.”

But this accommodation was not enough for the uses of the author and the printer. On the 12th October, 1816, Blackwood encloses to Murray two letters from Ballantyne—in one of them asking for the loan of £100 for a week; and in the other requesting, on the part of the author of the ‘Tales of my Landlord,’ that Blackwood and Murray should each give him a bill at three months, on account, for £250, to be renewed so as to give the full term of credit. Both publishers answered to the same effect—declining to advance the loan of £100, and refusing to go on upon the system of bills; but stating that so soon as the book was ready for delivery, they would at once be ready to settle for the full amount.

Scott was at this time sorely pressed for ready money. He was buying one piece of land after another, usually at exorbitant prices, and having already increased the estate of Abbotsford from 150 to nearly 1000 acres, he was in communication with Mr. Edward Blore as to the erection of a dwelling adjacent to the cottage, at a point facing the Tweed. This house grew and expanded, until it became the spacious mansion of Abbotsford. The Ballantynes also were ravenous for more money; but they could get nothing from Blackwood and Murray before the promised work was finished.

At last the book was completed, printed, and published on the 1st of December, 1816; but without the magical



words, "by the Author of 'Waverley,'" on the title-page. All doubts as to the work being by the author of 'Waverley,' says Lockhart, had worn themselves out before the lapse of a week.

*John Murray to Mr. Wm. Blackwood.*

December 13th, 1816.

"Having now heard every one's opinion about our 'Tales of my Landlord,' I feel competent to assure you that it is universally in their favour. There is only 'Meg Merrilies' in their way. It is even, I think, superior to the other three novels. You may go on printing as many and as fast as you can; for we certainly need not stop until we come to the end of our, unfortunately, limited 6000. . . . My copies are more than gone, and if you have any to spare pray send them up instantly."

On the following day Mr. Murray wrote to Mr. Scott :—

*John Murray to Mr. Scott.*

Dec. 14th, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

Although I dare not address you as the author of certain Tales—which, however, must be written either by Walter Scott or the devil—yet nothing can restrain me from thinking that it is to your influence with the author of them that I am indebted for the essential honour of being one of their publishers; and I must intrude upon you to offer my most hearty thanks, not divided but doubled, alike for my worldly gain therein, and for the great acquisition of professional reputation which their publication has already procured me. As to delight, I believe I could, under any oath that could be proposed, swear that I never experienced such great and unmixed pleasure in all my life as the reading of this exquisite work has afforded me; and if you witnessed the wet eyes and grinning cheeks with which, as the author's chamberlain, I receive the unanimous and vehement praise of them from every one who has read them, or heard the curses of those whose needs my scanty supply would not satisfy, you might judge

of the sincerity with which I now entreat you to assure the author of the most complete success. After this, I could throw all the other books which I have in the press into the Thames, for no one will either read them or buy. Lord Holland said, when I asked his opinion : "Opinion? we did not one of us go to bed all night, and nothing slept but my gout." Frere, Hallam, and Boswell; Lord Glenbervie came to me with tears in his eyes. "It is a cordial," he said, "which has saved Lady Glenbervie's life." Heber, who found it on his table on his arrival from a journey, had no rest till he had read it. He has only this moment left me, and he, with many others, agrees that it surpasses all the other novels. Wm. Lamb also; Gifford never read anything like it, he says; and his estimate of it absolutely increases at each recollection of it. Barrow with great difficulty was forced to read it; and he said yesterday, "Very good, to be sure, but what powerful writing is *thrown away*." Heber says there are only two men in the world, Walter Scott and Lord Byron. Between you, you have given existence to a third.

Ever your faithful servant,

JOHN MURRAY.

This letter did not effectually "draw the badger." Scott replied in the following humorous but Jesuitical epistle:—

*Mr. Scott to John Murray.*

December 18th, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,

I give you hearty joy of the success of the Tales, although I do not claim that paternal interest in them which my friends do me the credit to assign to me. I assure you I have never read a volume of them till they were printed, and can only join with the rest of the world in applauding the true and striking portraits which they present of old Scottish manners.

I do not expect implicit reliance to be placed on my disavowal, because I know very well that he who is disposed not to own a work must necessarily deny it, and that otherwise his secret would be at the mercy of all who chose to ask the question, since silence in such a

case must always pass for consent, or rather assent. But I have a mode of convincing you that I am perfectly serious in my denial—pretty similar to that by which Solomon distinguished the fictitious from the real mother—and that is by reviewing the work, which I take to be an operation equal to that of quartering the child. . . Kind compliments to Heber, whom I expected at Abbotsford this summer; also to Mr. Croker and all your four o'clock visitors. I am just going to Abbotsford, to make a small addition to my premises there. I have now about seven hundred acres, thanks to the booksellers and the discerning public.

Yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

The happy chance of securing a review of the *Tales* by the author of 'Waverley' himself exceeded Murray's most sanguine expectations, and filled him with joy. He suggested that the reviewer, instead of sending an article on the Gypsies, as he proposed, should introduce whatever he had to say about that picturesque race in his review of the *Tales*, by way of comment on the character of Meg Merrilies. The review was written, and appeared in No. 32 of the *Quarterly*, in January 1817, by which time the novel had already gone to a third edition. It is curious now to look back upon the author reviewing his own work. He adopted Murray's view, and besides going over the history of 'Waverley,' and the characters introduced in that novel, he introduced a disquisition about Meg Merrilies and the Gypsies, as set forth in his novel of 'Guy Mannering.' He then proceeded to review the 'Black Dwarf' and 'Old Mortality,' but with the utmost skill avoided praising them, and rather endeavoured to put his friends off the scent by undervaluing them, and finding fault. The 'Black Dwarf,' for example, was full of "violent events which are so common in romance, and of such rare occurrence in real

life." Indeed, he wrote, "the narrative is unusually artificial; neither hero nor heroine excites interest of any sort, being just that sort of *pattern* people whom nobody cares a farthing about."

"The other story," he adds, "is of much deeper interest." He describes the person who gave the title to the novel—Robert Paterson, of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire—and introduces a good deal of historical knowledge, but takes exception to many of the circumstances mentioned in the story, at the same time quoting some of the best passages about Cuddie Headrigg and his mother. In respect to the influence of Claverhouse and General Dalzell, the reviewer states that "the author has cruelly falsified history," and relates the actual circumstances in reference to these generals. "We know little," he says, "that the author can say for himself to excuse these sophistications, and, therefore, may charitably suggest that he was writing a romance, and not a history." In conclusion, the reviewer observed, "We intended here to conclude this long article, when a strong report reached us of certain trans-Atlantic confessions, which, if genuine (though of this we know nothing), assign a different author to these volumes than the party suspected by our Scottish correspondents. Yet a critic may be excused seizing upon the nearest suspicious person, on the principle happily expressed by Claverhouse in a letter to the Earl of Linlithgow. He had been, it seems, in search of a gifted weaver who used to hold forth at conventicles. "I sent to seek the webster (weaver); they brought in his *brother* for him; though he maybe cannot preach like his brother, I doubt not but he is as well-principled as he, wherefore I thought it would be no great fault to give him the trouble to go to the jail with the rest."

"This *brother!*" It is probable that Scott sought to get rid of the imputation of being the author of the 'Waverley Novels' by insinuating that they were the work of his brother. At all events both Blackwood and Murray, with many others, were, in spite of themselves, thrown off the scent, first by his writing a review of his own work and then by alleging, from "certain trans-Atlantic confessions," that they were the work of his brother. In January 1817, Mr. Murray wrote to Mr. Blackwood :—

*John Murray to Mr. Wm. Blackwood.*

"I can assure you, but *in the greatest confidence*, that I have discovered the author of all these Novels to be Thomas Scott, Walter Scott's brother. He is now in Canada. I have no doubt but that Mr. Walter Scott did a great deal to the first 'Waverley Novel,' because of his anxiety to save his brother, and his doubt about the success of the work. This accounts for the many stories about it. Many persons had previously heard from Mr. Scott, but you may rely on the certainty of what I have told you. The whole country is starving for want of a complete supply of the 'Tales of my Landlord,' respecting the interest and merit of which there continues to be but one sentiment."

A few weeks later Blackwood wrote to Murray :—

*Mr. W. Blackwood to John Murray.*

January 22nd, 1817.

"It is an odd story here, that Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Scott are the authors of all these Novels. I, however, still think, as Mr. Croker said to me in one of his letters, that if they were not by Mr. Walter Scott, the only alternative is to give them to the devil, as by one or the other they must be written."

On the other hand, Bernard Barton wrote to Mr. Murray, and said that he had "heard that James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, was the author of 'Tales of my Landlord,' and

that he had had intimation from himself to that effect," by no means an improbable story considering Hogg's vanity. Lady Mackintosh also wrote to Mr. Murray:—"Did you hear who this *new* author of 'Waverley' and 'Guy Mannering' is? Mrs. Thomas Scott, as Mr. Thomas Scott assured Lord Selkirk (who had been in Canada), and his lordship, like Lord Monboddo, believes it." Murray again wrote to Blackwood (15th Feb., 1817):—"What is your theory as to the author of 'Harold the Dauntless'? I will believe, till within an inch of my life, that the author of 'Tales of my Landlord' is Thomas Scott."

Thus matters remained until a few years later, when George IV. was on his memorable visit to Edinburgh. Walter Scott was one of the heroes of the occasion, and was the selected cicerone to the King. One day George IV., in the sudden and abrupt manner which is peculiar to our Royal Family, asked Scott point-blank: "By the way, Scott, are you the author of 'Waverley'?" Scott as abruptly answered: "No, Sire!" Having made this answer (said Mr. Thomas Mitchell, who communicated the information to Mr. Murray some years later), "it is supposed that he considered it a matter of honour to keep the secret during the present King's reign. If the least personal allusion is made to the subject in Sir Walter's presence, Matthews says that his head gently drops upon his breast, and that is a signal for the person to desist."

With respect to the first series of the 'Tales of my Landlord,' so soon as the 6000 copies had been disposed of which the author, through Ballantyne, had covenanted as the maximum number to be published by Murray and Blackwood, the work reverted to Constable, and was published uniformly with the other works by the author of 'Waverley.'

## CHAPTER XIX.

BLACKWOOD'S ' EDINBURGH MAGAZINE ' — TERMINATION OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MURRAY AND BLACKWOOD.

WE have already seen that Mr. Murray had some correspondence with Thomas Campbell in 1806 respecting the establishment of a monthly magazine; such an undertaking had long been a favourite scheme of his, and he had mentioned the subject to many friends at home as well as abroad. He intended his monthly journal to be lighter and better adapted to the interests of the general reader than the elaborate essays in the *Quarterly*. He was, however, so much immersed in the publication of new and interesting works, which required his close and continuous attention, that the project was for a time postponed. But when Mr. Blackwood started his magazine, Murray informed his correspondents by printed circular that by obtaining an interest in that publication, and by throwing into it the materials which had been placed at his disposal, every purpose of his intended periodical might be advantageously accomplished. He concluded his circular by stating that he was "happy to say that he had succeeded in effecting what had been recommended to him, and that he was now joint proprietor and publisher of Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*."

Mr. Murray, however, did not become identified with that journal at its commencement, but at a later period

he wrote to Blackwood (10th January, 1817): "If you succeed with a magazine, which you ought not to be rash in attempting, you will effect what I have been trying to do for these five years past." Blackwood duly thought over the matter, and eventually determined to proceed with his venture. The first number appeared in April 1817, under the name of the "*Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, printed for William Blackwood, No. 17, Princes Street." Party politics were not mentioned in the original prospectus, nor was any sign of them to be observed in the early numbers of the magazine, which was at first a sort of antiquarian repertory, with notices of periodical publications, and a register of foreign and domestic affairs.

Blackwood was himself a contributor to the first number. He wrote to Murray :

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

April 14th, 1817.

"It will amuse you when I tell you that I am a contributor myself; and for the first time in my life I appear in print. At the time I received the 'Stories from the History of England' [by Croker] I was so much struck with them that I wrote a sketch of the book for the *Mercury*, but never got it inserted. On showing it to Pringle, he insisted on putting it in the *Magazine*; so here you have it. You will not be likely to find me in such a scrape again."

A fortnight later he again wrote :—

"I feel much more confidence in the magazine from your good opinion of it. I have staked myself upon it, and if it does fail it will not be from want of an anxious and ardent struggle in the cause. As far as consistent with your views, I am sure you will help me; and much you have in your power."

There was nothing very striking in the early numbers of the *Magazine*, and it does not appear to have obtained a



considerable circulation. The first editors were Thomas Pringle, who—in conjunction with a friend—was the author of a poem entitled 'The Institute,' and James Cleghorn, best known as a contributor to the *Farmers' Magazine*. Constable, who was himself the proprietor of the *Scots Magazine* as well as of the *Farmers' Magazine*, and desired to keep the monopoly of the Scottish monthly periodicals in his own hands, was greatly opposed to the new competitor. At all events, he contrived to draw away from Blackwood, Pringle and Cleghorn, and to start a new series of the *Scots Magazine* under the title of the *Edinburgh Magazine*. Blackwood thereupon changed the name of his periodical to that by which it has since been so well known. He undertook the editing himself, but soon obtained many able and indefatigable helpers.

There were then two young advocates walking the Parliament House in search of briefs; but the briefs never came. Yet they had plenty of "go" in them, though the public were late in finding it out. These were John Wilson (Christopher North) and John Gibson Lockhart (afterwards editor of the *Quarterly*). Both were West-countrymen—Wilson, the son of a wealthy Paisley manufacturer, and Lockhart, the son of the minister of Cambusnethan, in Lanarkshire—and both had received the best of educations, Wilson, the robust Christian, having carried off the Newdigate prize at Oxford, and Lockhart, having gained the Snell foundation at Glasgow, was sent to Balliol, and took a first class in classics in 1813. These, with Dr. Maginn—under the *sobriquet* of 'Morgan O'Dogherty,'—Hogg—the Ettrick Shepherd,—De Quincey—the Opium-eater,—Thomas Mitchell, and others, were the principal writers in *Blackwood*.

No. 7, the first of the new series, created an unprece-

dent ed stir in Edinburgh. It came out on the 1st of October, 1817, and sold very rapidly, but after 10,000 had been struck off it was suppressed, and could be had neither for love nor money. The cause of this sudden attraction was an article headed 'Translation from an Ancient Chaldee Manuscript,' purporting to be an extract from some newly discovered historical document, every paragraph of which contained a special hit at some particular person well known in Edinburgh society. There was very little ill-nature in it; at least, nothing like the amount which it excited in those who were, or imagined themselves to be, caricatured in it. Constable, the "Crafty," and Pringle and Cleghorn, editors of the *Edinburgh Magazine*, as well as Jeffrey, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, came in for their share of burlesque description.

Among the persons delineated in the article were the publisher of Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, whose name "was as it had been, the colour of Ebony:" indeed the name of Old Ebony long clung to the journal. The principal writers of the article were themselves included in the caricature. Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, was described as "the great wild boar from the forest of Lebanon, and he roused up his spirit, and I saw him whetting his dreadful tusks for the battle." Wilson was "the beautiful leopard," and Lockhart "the scorpion,"—names which were afterwards hurled back at them with interest. Walter Scott was described as "the great magician who dwelleth in the old fastness, hard by the river Jordan, which is by the Border." Mackenzie, Jameson, Leslie, Brewster, Tytler, Alison, M'Crie, Playfair, Lord Murray, the Duncans—in fact, all the leading men of Edinburgh were hit off in the same fashion.

Mrs. Garden, in her 'Memorials of James Hogg,' says

that "there is no doubt that Hogg wrote the first draft ; indeed, part of the original is still in the possession of the family. . . . Some of the more irreverent passages were not his, or were at all events largely added to by others before publication." \* In a recent number of *Blackwood* it is said that—

"Hogg's name is nearly associated with the Chaldee Manuscript. Of course he claimed credit for having written the skit, and undoubtedly he originated the idea. The rough draft came from his pen, and we cannot speak with certainty as to how it was subsequently manipulated. But there is every reason to believe that Wilson and Lockhart, probably assisted by Sir William Hamilton, went to work upon it, and so altered it that Hogg's original offspring was changed out of all knowledge." †

The whole article was probably intended as a harmless joke ; and the persons indicated, had they been wise, might have joined in the laugh or treated the matter with indifference. On the contrary, however, they felt profoundly indignant, and some of them commenced actions in the Court of Session for the injuries done to their reputation.

The same number of *Blackwood* which contained the 'Translation from an Ancient Chaldee Manuscript,' contained two articles, one probably by Wilson, on Coleridge's 'Biographia Litteraria,' the other, signed "Z," by Lockhart, being the first of a series on 'The Cockney School of Poetry.' They were both clever, but abusive, and exceedingly personal in their allusions.

Murray expostulated with Blackwood on the personality of the articles. He feared lest they should be damaging to the permanent success of the journal. Blackwood replied

\* Mrs. Garden's 'Memorials of James Hogg,' p. 107.

† Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, Sept. 1882, pp. 368-9.

in a long letter, saying that the journal was prospering, and that it was only Constable and his myrmidons who were opposed to it, chiefly because of its success.

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

April 28th, 1818.

"It is not my province to vindicate everything that has been published in the magazine; but this I will be bold to say, that there is nothing in it which is discreditable, while there may be things in it which I might have wished otherwise, but over which I had no control. The poetical notices in the twelfth number I know have been much blamed; but I think if any one will read them unprejudiced, he will say they are humorous, but not ill-natured, and that no man of sense, with the exception of Constable, had any reason to be offended with them. In the general impression with regard to the magazine, I refer you to Mr. Scott, who has been my steady friend and supporter in the whole conflict, or battle of the beasts. In a letter I had from him two days ago, he says, with regard to a person who is vastly angry, 'this is just as it ought to be, for jades do not wince but when they are galled.'"

In August 1818, Murray paid £1000 for a half share in the magazine, and from this time he took a deep and active interest in its progress, advising Blackwood as to its management, and urging him to introduce more foreign literary news, as well as more scientific information. He did not like the idea of two editors, who seem to have taken the management into their own hands. In a letter to Blackwood he wrote:—

*John Murray to Mr. Blackwood.*

Sept. 1818.

"Sir R. Phillips replied truly to D'Israeli, who boasted of the *talent* we could muster, 'I don't care a farthing for talent.' Nothing is equal to the excellence of most of our

papers abstractedly. The prominent feature of the magazine should be literary and scientific news, and most of all the latter, for which your editors appear to have little estimation, and they seem not to be the least aware that this is ten times more interesting to the public than any other class of literature at present. I cannot sit down to write studied letters, and I only write in confidence to you, just as I should converse. I do not either want to dictate to your editors. . . . You have unfortunately too much of the Lake School, for which no interest is felt here. Your editors want tact as to the public interest ; and by having two, in fact you have no editor : they are more intent on their own writings than in collecting materials from others, and in abridging, altering, adding to, and improving the contributions that are sent to them. . . . One great advantage of the editor of the *Q. R.* (Gifford) is that he does not write ; but what he does do is equal in value to writing half of each number. And never in any instance was an article copied before it was sent to the printer. We can confide in each other. Give us foreign literature, particularly German ; and let them create *news* in all departments. . . . As I before said, you and I are not editors, but publishers. We know the first effect, though we may not be able so easily to gauge the cause of its not being proportionate to our expectations."

Subsequent numbers of *Blackwood* contained other reviews of 'The Cockney School of Poetry : ' Leigh Hunt, "the King of the Cockneys," was attacked in May, and in August it was the poet Keats who came under the critic's lash, four months after Croker's famous review of 'Endymion' in the *Quarterly*.\*

\* It was said that Keats was killed by this brief notice, of four pages, in the *Quarterly* ; and Byron, in his 'Don Juan,' gave credit to this statement :—

"Poor Keats, who was killed off by one critique,  
Just as he really promised something great, . . .  
'Tis strange, the mind, that very fiery particle,  
Should let itself be snuffed out by an article."

Leigh Hunt, one of Keats' warmest friends, when in Italy, told Lord  
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The same number of *Blackwood* contained a short article about Hazlitt—elsewhere styled “pimpled Hazlitt.” It was very short, and entitled “Hazlitt cross-questioned.” Hazlitt considered the article full of abuse, and commenced an action for libel against the proprietors of the magazine. Upon this Blackwood sent Hazlitt’s threatening letter to Murray, with his remarks :—

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Sept. 22nd, 1818.

“I suppose this fellow merely means to make a little bluster, and try if he can pick up a little money. There is nothing whatever actionable in the paper. . . . The article on Hazlitt, which will commence next number, will be a most powerful one, and this business will not deprive it of any of its edge.”

Sept. 25th, 1818.

“What are people saying about that fellow Hazlitt attempting to prosecute? There was a rascally paragraph in the *Times* of Friday last mentioning the prosecution, and saying the magazine was a work filled with private slander. My friends laugh at the idea of his prosecution.”

Mr. Murray, however, became increasingly dissatisfied with this state of things; he never sympathised with the slashing criticisms of *Blackwood*, and strongly disapproved of the personalities, an opinion which was shared by most of his literary friends. At the same time his name was on

Byron (as he relates in his Autobiography) the real state of the case, proving to him that the supposition of Keats’ death being the result of the review was a mistake, and therefore, if printed, would be a misrepresentation. But the stroke of wit was not to be given up. Either Mr. Gifford, or “the poet-priest Milman,” has generally, but erroneously, been blamed for being the author of the review in the *Quarterly*, which, as is now well known, was written by Mr. Croker.

the title-page of the magazine, and he was jointly responsible with Blackwood for the articles which appeared there. On the 25th of September he wrote :—

*John Murray to Mr. Blackwood.*

“I have been employed in collecting generally and individually opinions respecting the magazine. At present I will just say that everyone agrees in the talent of the work, but they object to its personality ; and what I must particularly recommend is, that our contributors should insert nothing that will in any way deprive us of the countenance of our best friends.”

Sept. 28th, 1818.

“I have delayed writing for no other reason than that I was desirous of gathering from all quarters the opinion respecting our magazine, and you will believe how great my own regret is at finding the clamour against its *personality* almost universal. . . . You must naturally be aware that all eyes are turned to me—who am so accessible from situation and the open house I keep, when compared to the Row, where no one goes except upon positive business. I feel seriously and sensibly the operation of opinions at which I only guessed before. I have undergone most severe remonstrance from my best and most important friends, who press upon me my character with the public, in which they are naturally interested, and in some degree implicated ; that even if I were right, it is not what I think, but what the public will think of me for stepping out of a line of conduct which hitherto has gained respect from all parties. Now, what applies to me in this respect, from the accident of my being rather more in the public eye than either you or your friends have yet been, applies also, as I think you will admit, no less to yourselves ; and you must be aware that what would depreciate opinion respecting me must naturally operate in a similar degree upon you. My hands are withered by it. I cannot offer the work without encountering the dread of reproachful refusal ; and as to obtaining contributions from men of character, I might as soon ask them to let me stab them in their backs.”

The letter extends to eleven quarto pages in length, and is all to the same effect. Mr. Murray deprecates the personality of the articles in the magazine, and entreats that they be kept out. If not, he begs that Blackwood will omit his name from the title-page of the work. "A great friend of yours," he says, "asks if you are mad. I do wonder, I assure you, how you could have borne reproaches for which no compensation could atone. I would not, I could not, endure it for another number if you would send me 5000 guineas."

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Sept. 29th, 1818.

"I perfectly agree with you in all you say about personality in expression. I have always been doing as much in this way as I can, and to-day I communicated to my friends what you say on the subject. They are to do what they can to obviate any objections on this score; but we may lay our account for the 'hue and cry' being always attempted to be raised by those who are attacked, however justly."

And again:—

Oct. 2nd, 1818.

MY DEAR MURRAY,

What would I not have given to have been with you yesterday? One half-hour's conversation would have been such a relief to us both, as I know I could at once have taken a load off your mind, by assuring you that everything will go on well, as in future there will be nothing in the magazine which will give any proper ground for outcry being raised against it. I can easily conceive the state of mind you must have been in, and I feel quite happy that you have written me so fully and freely. It is needless, however, for you to distress yourself about what is past, for really when you examine the matter again calmly and coolly, there is not such ground for alarm as you fear, and friends have conjured up; and as to the future, I now feel perfectly at ease. Your letter has



pleased and satisfied our friends. Mr. W[ilson] has called just now, and I have the happiness of enclosing you a most admirable letter\* which they have written this morning, and which, in fact, leaves me nothing almost to say. . . . For God's sake, keep your mind easy ; there is nothing to fear. My rule always was in all my difficulties for the last twelve months, to put the best face upon everything, and even with regard to articles which I have done my utmost to keep out or get modified, I never once admitted they were wrong. If any one perceives that we are uneasy or doubtful, then they pour in their shot like hail.

A long correspondence took place during the month of October between Murray and Blackwood : the former continuing to declaim against the personality of the articles ; the latter averring that there was nothing of the sort in the magazine. If Blackwood would only keep out these personal attacks, Murray would take care to send him articles by Mr. Frere, Mr. Barrow, and others, which would enhance the popularity and respectability of the publication. It was not from persons who had been attacked, or their friends, that Murray had received expostulations ; but "from our own friends and hearty well-wishers." "I bargain *only*," he said, "for NO personality."

*John Murray to Mr. Blackwood.*

"I will do anything if you will only be good, and keep the peace. . . . I enclose six excellent letters upon Literature, by Horace Walpole. They have never been published. I have got D'Israeli to let me have them, in consequence of his impression respecting this number, and I have reason to believe that I can induce him to be a regular correspondent in a very useful way ; . . . but even he contributes upon my pledge that personality is at an end. . . . Sir James Mackintosh has received many civilities from me, which he would willingly return, and it has always been my intention to ask him to contribute to the magazine ; but I cannot do so at this time, in conse-

\* A copy of this letter has not been retained.

quence of the attacks on the *Edinburgh Review*; and if the proposed article on Brougham is inserted, my hopes are at an end. . . . I enclose a beautiful translation of a very celebrated Italian poem, by Mr. Milman; but look over it, and tell me if it is liked; also the enclosed by Southey, whom I will try also. . . . It is possible that I may induce Mr. Frere to continue 'Whistlecraft' in the magazine; and Lord Byron may send something, as well as many persons of the first rank. But this is utterly hopeless if either of the above causes (personality, &c.) interferes; for I would not submit to the pain of a repulse. . . . Mr. B[arrow] has just been here again, and says that this is a redeeming number, and that they are very clever fellows who write in it. So that you see I can bring up your lee-way if you will let me. Best compliments to Mr. Wilson and Mr. Lockhart . . . Vale.—J. M."

Troubles, however, were coming.

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Oct. 6th, 1818.

"I have this instant received Hazlitt's summons for his action in the Court of Session, in which he claims £2000 for damages! . . . The matter sits very lightly upon me and our friends. . . . Some time ago I retained Mr. Cranstoun."

Oct. 10th, 1818.

"It will save a great deal of trouble and botheration if Hazlitt gives up his action, and I think there is every probability of his doing so. He never would have thought of it had he not been urged on by Constable, who must be at the whole expense if it proceeds. Our friends are to speak to Mr. Scott, to tell C—— strongly that he must give up this system of urging on actions, else it will be worse for him."

The circulation of the magazine had now become very considerable: 1500 copies of the October number having been sent to London.

Another subject of annoyance was about to make its appearance.

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Oct. 17th, 1818.

"That stupid fellow, Pillans' brother, announces in to-day's papers: 'To be published on Monday, "Hypocrisy Unveiled and Calumny Detected," in a review of *Blackwood's Magazine*.' I have not yet been able to hear a syllable about it. I wonder if it can be done by John Murray [afterwards Lord Murray]. We shall soon be able to ferret it out. I shall be very anxious till I see it."

It turned out that the anonymous pamphlet, entitled 'Hypocrisy Unveiled,' raked up the whole of the joke contained in the 'Translation from an Ancient Chaldee Manuscript,' published a year before, which was supposed to be forgotten. The number containing it had, as we have already seen, been suppressed, because of the offence it had given to many persons of celebrity, while the general tone of bitterness and personality had been subsequently modified, if not abandoned. Murray assured Blackwood that his number for October 1818 was one of the best he had ever read, and he desired him to "offer to his friends his very best thanks and congratulations upon the production of so admirable a number." "With this number," he said, "you have given me a fulcrum upon which I will move heaven and earth to get subscribers and contributors." Indeed, several of the contributions in this surpassingly excellent number had been sent to the Edinburgh publisher through the instrumentality of Murray himself.

'Hypocrisy Unveiled' was a lampoon of a scurrilous and commonplace character, in which the leading contributors to and the publishers of the magazine were violently attacked. Both Murray and Blackwood, who were abused openly, by name, resolved to take no notice of it; but Lockhart and Wilson, who were mentioned under the thin disguise of "the Scorpion" and "the Leopard," were

so nettled by the remarks on themselves, that they, in October 1818, both sent challenges to the anonymous author, through the publisher of the pamphlet. This most injudicious step only increased their discomfiture, as the unknown writer not only refused to proclaim his identity, but published and circulated the challenges, together with a further attack on Lockhart and Wilson.

This foolish disclosure caused bitter vexation to Murray, who wrote :—

*John Murray to Mr. Blackwood.*

Oct. 27th, 1818.

MY DEAR BLACKWOOD,

I really can recollect no parallel to the palpable absurdity of your two friends. If they had planned the most complete triumph to their adversaries, nothing could have been so successfully effective. They have actually given up their names, as the authors of the offences charged upon them, by implication only, in the pamphlet. How they could possibly conceive that the writer of the pamphlet would be such an idiot as to quit his stronghold of concealment, and allow his head to be chopped off by exposure, I am at a loss to conceive. Their only course was to have affected, and indeed to have felt, the most perfect indifference, and to have laughed at the rage which dictated so much scurrility ; slyly watching to discover the author, whom, without appearing to know as such, they should have annoyed in every possible way. Their exposure now is complete, and they must be prepared for attacks themselves in every shape. Their adversaries are acting with the most judicious effect in sending their letters to every person they know. I received one by post. The means thus put into the hands of Hunt, Hazlitt, &c., are enormous, and they will now turn the tables upon them.

I declare to God that had I known what I had so incautiously engaged in, I would not have undertaken what I have done, or have suffered what I have in my feelings and character—which no man had hitherto the slightest cause for assailing—I would not have done so for any sum. But, being in, I am determined to go through

with you, and if our friends will only act with redoubled discretion, we may get the better of this check, and yet gain a victory. They should by a masterly effort pluck the thing out of their minds: it is done; but how in the name of wonder they could act with such an utter disregard of all and almost daily experience, I am too much vexed and disappointed to conceive. The only course to be taken now is to redouble every effort for the improvement of the magazine. Let us take public estimation by assault; by the irresistible effect of talent employed on subjects that are interesting; and above all, I say, to collect information on passing events. Our editors are totally mistaken in thinking that this consists in laborious essays. These are very good as accessories, but the flesh and blood and bones is information. That will make the public *eager* to get us at the end of the month; and, by the way, the tone of every article should be gentlemanly; . . . and, I repeat, if you wish to be universally read, the magazine should be conciliatory, so as to make it open for all mankind to read and to contribute. For such a mammoth of a work every month you will find must consume all the means that you can collect from all quarters.

What you must suffer from this must be inconceivably annoying; but, seeing how THEY feel under the first touch of *personality*, you will be the better able to conceive the sensations of others, and resolve never to insert anything of the kind again. Even the article on Thomas Moore was unnecessary and unkind, and, as Mr. C[roker] told me, cannot fail of giving him pain and making yourselves more enemies. In the name of God, why do you seem to think it *indispensable* that each number must give pain to some one or other. Why not think of giving pleasure to all? This should be the real object of a magazine. Pray let me hear from you instantly as to the effect of this injudicious matter, and tell me if they propose to take any further step. The answer to W[ilson] and L[ockhart] is obviously written by talent much superior to that displayed in the pamphlet, and it is written with triumph, not with irritation. I am so vexed at this business that I cannot write about any other matters until to-morrow.

Yours ever,

J. M.

Many more letters passed between the proprietors of the magazine on the subject. Blackwood agreed with Murray as to his view of the question. "Wilson," he said, "felt sore and enraged, for he could not endure the least breath of anything ungentlemanly." Lockhart laughed at the whole business. Blackwood desired to dismiss it from his mind, to treat the matter with silence, and to do all that was possible to increase the popularity of the magazine. The next number, he said, would be excellent and unexceptionable; and it proved to be so. "Out of evil," he wrote (30th Oct.), "cometh good; and I have no doubt but that this vile business will both animate their exertions and make them much more cautious for the future. . . . Another number or two will put us in smooth water. Much as we have been vexed already, we will yet be amply repaid for all our troubles."

The difficulty, however, was not yet over. While the principal editors of the *Chaldee Manuscript* had thus revealed themselves to the author of 'Hypocrisy Unveiled,' the London publisher of *Blackwood* was, in November 1818, assailed by a biting pamphlet, entitled 'A Letter to Mr. John Murray, of Albemarle Street, occasioned by his having undertaken the publication, in London, of *Blackwood's Magazine*.' "The curse of his respectability," he was told, had brought the letter upon him. "Your name stands among the very highest in the department of Literature which has fallen to your lot: the eminent persons who have confided in you, and the works you have given to the world, have conduced to your establishment in the public favour; while your liberality, your impartiality, and your private motives, bear testimony to the justice of your claims to that honourable distinction." It was alleged that his elevation put him "above the reach of mere speculators

in literature," and yet he was the avowed publisher of a magazine in which men of the highest character had been assailed and slandered. After some more similar remarks, in the course of which it was alleged that Mr. Murray had revived the power of the magazine—although then sinking beneath contempt—by placing his name upon its cover, he was requested, "in the name of an insulted public, to renounce this infamous magazine." "I conjure you," said the author, "by your reputation, by your honour, by your sense of justice: I implore you by your regard for the good opinion of men, to renounce it: I appeal to your own bosom whether you are not ashamed of your connection with it. Renounce it, renounce it!"

Many more appeals of the same kind reached Mr. Murray's ear. Moore, in his Diary (4th Nov., 1818), writes: "Received two most civil and anxious letters from the great 'Bibliopola Tryphon' Murray, expressing his regret at the article in *Blackwood*, and his resolution to give up all concern in it if it contained any more such personalities." \*

Hazlitt's action against the proprietors of *Blackwood's Magazine* was proceeded with, but Murray received a letter from Edinburgh in November 1818, saying that nothing had been done to defend the case. He was not unnaturally annoyed at this, and replied:—

*John Murray to Mr. Blackwood.*

November 27th, 1818.

MY DEAR BLACKWOOD,

Your letter has occupied my whole morning. Nothing can be worse than your inattention to so important a matter. Even at this late period you omit to send me any

\* 'Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore.' ii., 210. By Lord John Russell.

one document on which counsel can form an opinion. What is the accusation? What can you prove? How you could let it fall in this manner at your door I cannot conceive; but I have done the best I can. . . I have had a long consultation with Mr. Turner, and I have sent after, and searched myself after, the works which the fellow has written. Mr. Turner will write to-night. To neglect such a thing as this when three-fourths of the talent of the Bar are in hostility to you, and when any jury will be prejudiced against you, is very reprehensible. The magazine is very far superior to the former one, and is liked by everyone who has seen it; but at my leisure I shall write more particularly respecting it. In the meantime I am collecting some excellent articles, which shall be sent on Monday.

Most truly yours,

JOHN MURRAY.

I hope they will arrive in time, or it is ruin to us as to effect.

Three days later Murray wrote to Blackwood that he was determined to stand by the magazine, notwithstanding the aspersions made against him; but solely on condition that the writers in the magazine would abstain from all personality. "You see," he wrote (30th November), "that I am giving *essential* assistance to it, and that ought to be the best pledge of my intentions." He still insisted that the magazine should give more information as to what was going on in the world.

*John Murray to Mr. Wm. Blackwood.*

December 7th, 1818.

"At any rate, I hope the next number will be free of politics and of personality. If, for instance, you are going to attack Mr. Brougham, you must strike out my name. Mackintosh is offended, and thus a very material source is closed to me—at least, until your *literary* character is established. Mr. Turner is, I presume, in regular negotiation with Mr. Patmore (Hazlitt's friend), and in active



correspondence with you. Southey, in a letter received this day, has the following passage: 'It was said some time ago in the *Times* that Hazlitt had meditated an action against *Blackwood's Magazine*. I do not believe it. He would not run the risk of having me subpœnaed upon the trial.'"

At last the Hazlitt action was settled. Blackwood, after acknowledging the receipt of a "glorious article" for the magazine on the North-West Expedition, from Murray, proceeds:—

*Mr. Blackwood to John Murray.*

Dec. 16th, 1818.

"I have had two letters from Mr. Patmore, informing me that Mr. Hazlitt was to drop the prosecution. His agent has since applied to mine offering to do this, if the expenses and a small sum for some charity were paid. My agent told him he would certainly advise any client of his to get out of court, but that he would never advise me to pay anything to be made a talk of, as a sum for a charity would be. He would advise me, he said, to pay the expenses, and a trifle to Hazlitt himself privately. Hazlitt's agent agreed to this."\*

The correspondence between Murray and Blackwood continued, and the London sale of the magazine was augmented by Murray's energy to 2000 copies early in 1819, but negotiations did not go on quite smoothly between the proprietors. Murray still complained of the personalities, and of the way in which the magazine was edited. "Indeed," he wrote (9th January, 1819), "as editors, they are not worth sixpence." He also objected to the "echo of the *Edinburgh Review's* abuse of Sharon Turner. It was sufficient to give pain to me, and to my most valued friend. There was another ungentlemanly and

\* I have not been able to discover what sum, if any, was paid to Hazlitt privately.

uncalled-for thrust at Thomas Moore. That just makes so many more enemies, unnecessarily ; and you not only deprive me of the communications of my friends, but you positively provoke them to go over to your adversary."

Nevertheless, it appeared to be impossible to exercise any control over the editors, who inserted or rejected whatever they pleased. Murray objected to 'Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk' (by Lockhart), which was a renewal in a petty way of the personalities which had been so often reprobated.

*John Murray to Mr. Blackwood.*

Feb. 20th. 1819.

"I declare I cannot conceive how you can still suffer such articles to appear, knowing the ill-blood which they occasion. I assure you it is degrading, and I should certainly feel ashamed of publishing it. I fear you will think me very troublesome in my correspondence about the magazine, but as my character is at stake, you must not be surprised at my anxiety to lose no more of it on this account. I am very far from wishing to trouble you, and if you wish to be quit of me, you have only to pay me off, and I will retire ; but such things I cannot publish."

Murray had no alternative left but to expostulate, and if his expostulations were unheeded, to retire from the magazine. The last course was that which he eventually decided to adopt, and the end of the partnership in *Blackwood's Magazine*, which had long been anticipated, at length arrived. Murray's name appeared for the last time on No. 22, for January 1819 ; the following number bore no London publisher's name ; but on the number for March the names of T. Cadell and W. Davies were advertised as the London agents for the magazine.

The editors, being now free from the expostulations of Mr. Murray, proceeded with their reviews on the 'Cockney School of Poetry.' Indeed, No. 22, the last

number published by Murray, contained a review of the 'Revolt of Islam,' wherein Shelley was declared to be also one of the Cockney School, and "devoting his mind to the same pernicious purposes which have recoiled in vengeance upon so many of his contemporaries." "Hunt and Keats," it was said, "and some others of the school, are indeed men of considerable cleverness, but as poets they are worthy of sheer and instant contempt." Shelley, on the other hand, was praised for his poem, which was "impressed everywhere with the more noble and majestic footsteps of his genius."

On the 17th of December, 1819, £1000 were remitted to Mr. Murray in payment of the sum which he had originally advanced to purchase his share, and his connection with Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine* finally ceased. He thereupon transferred his agency for Scotland to Messrs. Oliver and Boyd, with whose firm it has ever since remained. The friendly correspondence between Murray and Blackwood nevertheless continued, as they were jointly interested in several works of importance.

In the course of the following year, "Christopher North" made the following statement in *Blackwood's Magazine* in "An Hour's Tête-à-tête with the Public :"—

"The Chaldee Manuscript, which appeared in our seventh number, gave us both a lift and a shove. Nothing else was talked of for a long while; and after 10,000 copies had been sold, it became a very great rarity, quite a desideratum. . . . The sale of the *Quarterly* is about 14,000, of the *Edinburgh* upwards of 7000. . . . It is not our intention, at present, to suffer our sale to go beyond 17,000. . . . Mr. Murray, under whose auspices our *magnum opus* issued for a few months from Albemarle Street, began to suspect that we might be eclipsing the *Quarterly Review*. No such eclipse had been foretold; and Mr. Murray, being no great astronomer, was at a loss to know whether, in the darkness that was but too visible, we were eclipsing the

*Quarterly*, or the *Quarterly* eclipsing us. We accordingly took our pen, and erased his name from our title-page, and he was once more happy. Under our present publishers we carry everything before us in London."

Mr. Murray took no notice of this statement, preferring, without any more words, to be quit of his bargain.

It need scarcely be added, that when Mr. Blackwood had got his critics and contributors well in hand—when his journal had passed its frisky and juvenile life of fun and frolic—when the personalities had ceased to appear in its columns, and it had reached the years of judgment and discretion—and especially when its principal editor, Mr. John Wilson (Christopher North), had been appointed to the distinguished position of Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh—the journal took that high rank in periodical literature which it has ever since maintained.

END OF VOL. I.

ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON.

October, 1890.

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